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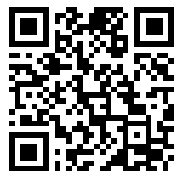
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THE  
ALPINE JOURNAL: DQ  
821

A RECORD OF MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE

AND

SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION.

BY MEMBERS OF THE ALPINE CLUB. E1

EDITED BY GEORGE YELD AND J. P. FARRAR.

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Notices for the next Number which, as at present arranged, will appear in November 1920, should be sent to G. YELD, Esq., Alpine Club, 23 Savile Row, W.1, or 2 Burton Lane, York, as early as possible, and not later than September 15, 1920.

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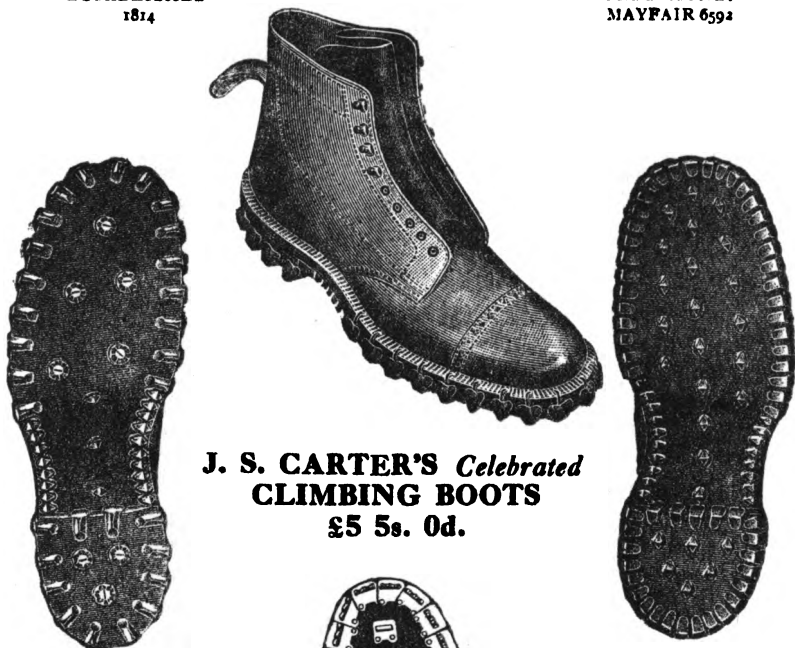
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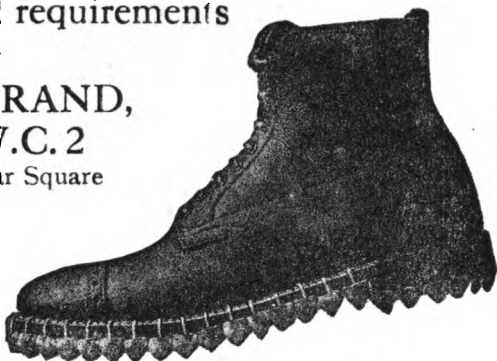
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# THE ALPINE JOURNAL.

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MARCH 1920.

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(No. 220.)

DISCOURS DE M. LE BARON GABET, PRÉSIDENT DU CLUB  
ALPIN FRANÇAIS.

AU BANQUET ANNUEL DE L'ALPINE CLUB.

**MY LORDS AND GOOD FRIENDS :**

Votre éminent Président, le Capitaine Farrar, m'a déjà fait, depuis mon arrivée à Londres, la plus agréable démonstration de la courtoisie tout à fait charmante avec laquelle on sait pratiquer l'hospitalité en Angleterre. J'apprécie au plus haut point cette si bonne et si affable cordialité.

J'éprouve une grande émotion du chaleureux toast que M. Freshfield vient de porter au Club Alpin Français ; de telles paroles venant d'une si grande personnalité de l'Alpinisme, de celui qui en est la représentation même, ont vraiment une très grande valeur.

Vous êtes le plus ancien des Clubs Alpins et, soixante ans après votre fondation, toujours plus vivant, toujours plus actif. Vous avez été les véritables pionniers pour explorer les Alpes Françaises, la Savoie, le Dauphiné, les montagnes et les vallées de la Suisse.

Et puis, vous êtes partis à la découverte des sommets du monde entier. Vous avez été les initiateurs, les professeurs, les maîtres de l'Alpinisme ; vous êtes restés une sélection de grimpeurs émérités. Vos plus illustres ont consacré leur vie à l'exploration des hauts sommets.

Vous avez révélé l'amour de la montagne, les plaisirs de l'escalade, l'endurance, la résistance, le goût de l'effort, la joie de la conquête des cimes nouvelles et toute l'intensité des sensations et des sentiments éprouvés.

Et nous, alpinistes français, vos élèves, nous sommes avec  
VOL. XXXIII.—NO. CCXX.

B



vous pour aimer et admirer les grands monts qui donnent l'excitement d'une jouissance intensive, qui nous rendent meilleurs, plus vaillants, plus forts, qui nous transportent plus haut avec des cœurs plus chauds, des âmes plus ardentes.

Le Club Alpin Français, arrivé plus tard que vous dans la carrière, a voulu, après la guerre de 1870, former une jeunesse française plus forte par la pratique de l'Alpinisme. Nous avons marché avec notre devise, '*Pour la Patrie par la Montagne,*' pour relever notre patrie meurtrie. C'est ainsi qu'ont été formés les bataillons de Chasseurs Alpins qui sont devenus les vaillants entre les vaillants.

Nous préparons la résistance.

Brusquement, le grand vent de la terrible tempête s'est levé le 1er Août 1914 ; le tocsin a sonné dans les villes et dans les campagnes. Les ouvriers ont abandonné l'usine, les paysans ont abandonné la charrue, et tous ont accouru, laissant tout pour sauver la Patrie en danger.

Alors, notre grand mérite à nous, Club Alpin Français, c'est le courage des nôtres, toujours héroïques dans la grande guerre, c'est d'avoir obtenu le maximum de la proportion des morts au champ d'honneur, au milieu des 1,500,000 morts des armées françaises. Ces glorieux sont tombés pour la liberté du monde !

C'est donc d'un même élan avec vous, Grande Bretagne, Ecosse, Canada, Australie, Nouvelle-Zélande, Indes, Afrique du Sud, que nous avons résisté au choc ces Barbares, que nous avons reculé deux fois, mais reculé sans défaillance et toujours confiants et courageux, que nous avons tenu bravement, avec ténacité, dans la tranchée pendant si longtemps ; et, enfin, après quatre années de luttes héroïques, nous avons eu, ensemble, la grande victoire, la victoire décisive.

Entre nos deux nations, entre nos peuples, *la Cordiale Amitié est maintenant scellée pour toujours.*

Je termine en adressant encore mes bien vifs remerciements à l'Alpine Club et à son éminent Président, le Capitaine J. P. Farrar pour leur chaleureux accueil.

The Baron was received, both on rising and at the end of his eloquent speech, with a storm of applause, the whole company rising ; and the cheering was again renewed when, at the end of the speech of the Lord Chancellor, Baron Gabet stepped forward and vigorously shook him by the hand, in recognition of his sympathetic allusions to the splendid object lesson offered by France to the world, and to the feelings of admiration and warm regard existing in this country towards the sister nation.

## VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

BY J. P. FARRAR, PRESIDENT OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

SIX years ago, Sir Edward Davidson told us how these triennial inflictions of an address to the Club arose.

Now two of the three years of my Presidency from a mountaineering point of view have been almost barren, and the third permitted only a scant revival of active mountaineering.

You will thus be prepared for a very prosaic address from me. You cannot well expect from me great literary landmarks like some addresses of my predecessors.

The attendances at our meetings, among other signs, convince me that the Club's interest in our pursuit is as keen as ever, and that the repression of the last six years will be followed by an outburst of great mountaineering energy.

With respect to the internal affairs of the Club, we started the first year of my term (1917) with 658 members. We expect to start next year with 642.

It is a great satisfaction to see that we have still with us two members of 60 years' standing: Professor Bonney and Sir James Ramsay of Bamff, who opened the Midi route nearly 65 years ago; while four—Mr. Edward Buxton, Mr. Blanford, Mr. Hawkshaw, and Father J. K. Stone—have been members for 59 years.

We have actually 80 members of 50 years' standing or more, but Mr. Freshfield's 55 years of membership surely indicate a remarkable degree of precocity.

Our financial position at the end of 1918, the last year for which full figures are available, was very sound, and the estimates for 1919 leave no cause for any anxiety.

This position is due in a great measure to the self-sacrifice of my good friend Charles Wollaston, who has served under three Presidents with masterly tact, or shall I say with tactful mastery?

Unfortunately we have lost by death many members. Losses up to the date of the last meeting have been mentioned from the Chair, and recorded in the obituary notices in the JOURNAL.

First and foremost stands Charles Pilkington, of whom I had the honour to speak at the February meeting. His place among us will always be kept.

In Frederick Gardiner, who speedily followed his comrade, the Club lost a most indefatigable mountaineer, of whom his companion, Lawrence Pilkington, has written a sympathetic notice for the JOURNAL.

Our losses further included pioneers like Liveing and Woodmass and Rivington—men of science like De Candolle and Hopkinson—explorers like W. Spotswood Green—Philpott, the survivor of the famous partnership of Hornby, Philpott, and Almer—Roosevelt, the sometime U.S. President, great-hearted in whatever he did.

The loss of these men must be expected by a veteran Club like ours and borne with resignation.

But there are losses of a different kind. The Club mourns with proud regret its sons fallen in battle in the full strength of manhood. I mention only the losses of the Presidential period: Gerald Arbuthnot, H. O. S. Gibson, Cyril Hartree, Charlie Inglis Clark, R. E. Thompson, T. E. Goodeve, Neville Done, whose clear and energetic voice I still seem to hear as almost six years ago to-night he thanked the then retiring President. Others, Bertram Hopkinson, Russell Clarke, and Henri Duhamel, veteran of 1870, volunteer of 1914, equally gave their lives for their country even if not actually in battle.

The Journal has paid tribute to their memories. The Club will not forget. But our tale of losses is not yet told.

In John Herbert Wicks, the Club loses a distinguished member. His mountaineering record is so well known to every man here that I need not dwell on it.

I well remember that his election to Committee in 1891 was accepted with peculiar satisfaction by the hard-climbing members of the day. We looked on him as our particular Committee man, and he remained to the end a type of English climber of whom we were proud. He was essentially a strong man, silent, sagacious in council, steadfast in danger, uncomplaining in defeat, of great endurance, sound in knowledge capable in execution—a staunch friend said, if needs be, to be a fearless opponent.

A picturesque figure is lost to us in the Rev. Florence Thomas Wethered, elected in 1873. In his time a very active mountaineer, good enough with old Papa Almer to descend the N. face of the Mönch—he remained to the end the most enthusiastic of my correspondents. Scarce a week passed without bringing me an epistle bubbling over with delightful energy. There has been no truer son of the Club.

We have lost in Mr. John Stogdon a member elected in

1869. His delightful 'Random Memories,' which appeared in the JOURNAL a little over two years ago, revealed to us the man, old in years if you like, but full of the splendid fervour of youth, revelling in memories of many a glorious day on the great mountains. It was a privilege to know and to see him in his own family and surroundings, as I did when I went over to Harrow about the paper. I feel that he died game and young in heart as ever—feelings and sympathies always keen. To Mrs. Stogdon, as keen and responsive as he was himself, we offer our respectful sympathy.

Lt.-Col. Sir Henry Trotter, elected in 1875, served originally on the Great Indian Survey, and had travelled in Turkestan and the Near East. He saw service with the Turkish Army in Asia Minor in the 1877 campaign, and was often employed by our own Government on missions of much responsibility.

Mr. F. W. Headley, elected in 1882, was a Haileybury master, and, like many of his profession, an ardent mountaineer. In 1910 many of us can recall his reading a very interesting paper on the 'Birds of the Alps.'

Mr. Larden, elected in 1886, best known by his monograph on the Arolla climbs, was not by any means a centrist. He had visited other parts of the Alps, and, in 1909, the Tupungato district in the Andes. He was likewise the author of a book of his Alpine journeys, and of a monograph on the inscriptions on Swiss chalets.

In Canon Henry Martin, elected in 1896, we lost an ardent lover of the mountains. His life's work was done as Principal of Winchester Diocesan Training College, which post he held for 34 years, but in many other capacities he rendered splendid service to the community.

We have also lost a distinguished Honorary Member, Dr. Moreno, the well-known Argentine traveller and scientist. He was the founder and for many years director of the La Plata Museum, and rendered signal service to his country as High Commissioner in the Boundary delimitation with Chili.

We have lost three great guides, Peter Knubel, Christian Jossi, and Johann Köderbacher, to whom tribute has been paid in the JOURNAL.

If we have lost all these old friends, I feel sure the Club may at least claim one potential member. Surely in the vigorous, if youthful, son of Geoffrey and Eleanor Young, grandson of Sir George Young and of William Cecil Slingsby, we may look forward, if breed counts, to an altogether transcendental mountaineer.

The Club learned with regret that Ulrich Almer, worthy son of a valiant father, had, in his old age, fallen on evil days. It is not the habit of this Club to neglect men who have served them well. A fund was immediately got together which ought to suffice to make Almer an allowance sufficient for the rest of his life.

During the period under review, MM. Ferrand, le Chevalier de Cessole, Puiseux, Martel, le Colonel Godefroy, distinguished French mountaineers, and MM. Paul Montandon and Julien Gallet, the well-known Swiss mountaineers, accepted Honorary Membership of this Club, while the French and Italian Clubs have been good enough to enter several of us among their Honorary Members. We value the honour as a proof of solidarity which we will leave nothing undone to foster.

M. le Baron Gabet, President of the C.A.F., whom we have the honour to welcome to-night, has very courteously intimated on behalf of his Club their desire to bring together our two Clubs, and to strengthen the claims of mountaineering in France, by electing to their Club any members of ours. The last act of my office will be to issue a circular inviting you to take advantage of this offer.

Major Morrison-Bell told us from this place of his brilliant Zermatt season; and I come now to the principal ascents of the year 1919.

Mr. R. W. Lloyd, led by Joseph Pollinger, ascended the steep N.N.W. ice slopes of the Col de Bionnassay, thus completing this Col. He also ascended the Cervin by the Galerie, of which he speaks with enthusiasm, and descended by the Zmutt—a new combination.

Messrs. Mallory and H. E. L. Porter made a new ascent of the Aig. du Midi from the N. side by what was mainly an arête route. They were much aided by crampons, and state that the route is absolutely sound, as indeed the marked photograph which will appear in the *ALPINE JOURNAL* shows it to be. Previous routes on this face have been unsatisfactory, and the new route reflects credit on the climbers' judgment.

The same party ascended the Grands Charmoz from the glacier de Trélaporte—'a very stiff rock climb and quite dramatic in its manner'—so Mallory writes, and those of us who have climbed with, or in my case, I should say *below*, Mallory, will appreciate what he calls 'very stiff.' The ascent was a variation—probably an improvement—on the Thorold-Pollinger ascent of 1899, and of the Fontaine-Ravanel descent



of 1902. Pollinger reported stone fall, whereas Mallory's party kept mainly on a rib on the upper part of the face, and thus avoided any danger from stones.

It is a peculiar satisfaction that climbs of this importance have been carried through by two of our younger men without assistance.

Our Honorary Member, M. Paul Montandon, repeated Mr. Young's route over the Rothe Zähne of the Gspaltenhorn, and writes in most enthusiastic terms of its delights. The words 'I know of no other climb, not even in the Dolomites, resembling this one,' from a man of his wide experience mean much.

He and Knubel traversed the Cervin by the Zmutt, the Gabelhorn-Wellenkuppe and ascended the Täschhorn and the Nordend. He *says* he is over 60, so there is still hope, or possibly despair, for some of us.

Mr. Raeburn, another veteran in years, is going as strong as ever. Unable to find a companion, he traversed the Meije *alone*. I shall not presume to criticise his succumbing to the fascination of an occasional solitary climb. He is a competent judge of his own powers. At the same time, only *Raeburns* had better follow his example.

Captain George Finch, in the absence of his brother Maxwell with his battery in Constantinople, suffered from strange companions, but made a new route to the glacier on the W. face of the Nordend, which peak he traversed to the Silber-sattel. He ascended the Dent d'Hérens by the N.W. arête, not often done, although opened nearly 40 years ago.

The eminent Italian mountaineers, the brothers Gugliermi have made a new ascent of the S.W. face of Lyskamm. The route lies between the arêtes Perazzi and del Naso, and strikes the summit itself. A route up the S. face of the W. Lyskamm was made by Signor Ravelli and some other Italian climbers.

The most interesting expedition of the year is the ascent of the face of M. Blanc de Courmayeur contained between the Peuteret and Brouillard arêtes, done by Messrs. Courtauld and Oliver—two of the strongest and most capable of our young men—with a strong guide contingent, Henri and Adolphe Rey and young Adolf Aufdenblatten of Zermatt.

H. O. Jones, after his great campaign of 1911, brought home the first detailed photo of the face taken from the Innominata. This appeared in the ALPINE JOURNAL, vol. xxvi. It was quite obvious that there was a route up this face, and from that time it became a subject of confidential discussion in high

mountaineering circles. Interest in it was stimulated further when the possible route was referred to in the unsigned masterly annual review of the mountaineering season, which the *Times* used to publish, and which I hope to see entrusted once more to the same able hands.

Its history dates back to at least 1874, as in that year Mr. T. S. Kennedy and Mr. Garth Marshall, with Johann Fischer and Hans Jaun, two able guides, made an attempt on this face or possibly on the Broglia arête; while a month later Mr. Marshall and Fischer were killed on the Broglia Glacier, as they were returning from a renewed attempt, or reconnaissance, Ulrich Almer alone escaping.

My good friend, Joseph Gugliermina, writes to me that he and his brother Baptiste, the great authorities on the Italian face of Mont Blanc, have for some years had in view a route up this face from the Fresnay arête, and reconnoitred it in 1915 and 1916, reaching in the latter year a height on it well above the level of the Aig. Blanche, when the time of day and threatening weather compelled their retreat. Last summer, with their friend François Ravelli, they again reached the higher end of the Fresnay arête where it abuts against the face, but did not feel justified in going on, owing to stones falling.

Our men in more favourable conditions started from the Col de Fresnay, and saw no stones. The arête up which they started ran out high up in the face, and they were compelled to traverse to another arête, and so eventually gained the great main Brouillard arête which they followed for 40 minutes to the summit of M. Blanc de Courmayeur.

The next climbers might try either to reach the summit direct (which, however, I think is not possible, as even the Peuteret arête reaches it a few yards on the Brouillard arête side), or to gain the latter arête at possibly a higher point.

Other climbs that were made by foreign climbers, and which only nearly a month of perfect weather rendered possible, are:—

From a bivouac on the Mischabeljoch the traverse of the Täschhorn, Dom, Südlenzspitze and Nadelhorn to the Mischabel hut. The porters, before starting back from the Mischabeljoch with the sleeping kit, amused themselves by strolling up the Täschhorn in 3 hours. From the Trift the young guide Perren, with a traveller, made the ascent of the Rothorn, whence the whole arête over the Trifthorn, Wellenkuppe and Gabelhorn was followed to the Arbenjoch and Zermatt.

The coiffeur at Saas Fee amused himself by ascending Fletschhorn and traversing Laquinhorn and Weissmies to Almagel.

I understand that H.M. the King of the Belgians, whom we are proud to number among our Honorary Members, showed in a short but arduous climbing campaign that the strain of over four years' war has not subdued his mountaineering ardour.

Two years ago we all heard with profound sympathy of the grievous affliction that had befallen on active service one of the most brilliant members of this Club. I mean, of course, Geoffrey Young. But he is quite undefeatable. He has been doing hard climbs in Wales and even harder in Cumberland, N. face of Pillar, 11 hours from Buttermere and back, the A buttress on Gimmer Crag, and other ascents. All he remarks is 'The screes etc. stay rather strenuous.' I understand the French Government have made him recently a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, while the Italian Government have nominated him Cavaliero of the Corona d'Italia—well-earned honours.

The only great climb by an *Englishwoman* of which I have heard is Miss Pickford's traverse of the Charmoz with Pollinger. She also did the Tacul. We, of course, look upon her as quite one of ourselves.

I do not think I need mention any other climbs. There have been no accidents to any of our people.

One of the best of the Swiss climbers, Herr Karl Steiner, and Herr Michel, were killed by lightning on the Scerscen-Bernina arête; a young Frenchman and two good Chamonix guides, Clément Payot and Jean Ducroz, were killed on the Aig. Verte. They seem to have found in the great couloir a thin layer of bad snow on ice which balled under their crampons. They fell about 1200 feet, and were found in the *rimaie* at the foot of the slope.

Two Swiss climbers slipped on the descent of the W. arête of Bietschhorn when turning by a snow slope one of the towers, and, unable to stop themselves, were picked up on the Bietschthal side, dead.

Herr Gustav Jahn, a well-known artist and one of the ablest of the Austrian climbers, and Herr M. Kofler were killed when attempting the very difficult N.W. arête of the Ödstein in the so-called Gesäuse in Styria, a favourite haunt of the Viennese. A glowing tribute to his memory from Herr Pichl appears in the *Ö.A.Z.* Jahn, with all the experience and strength of his 40 years, was a thoroughly capable leader,

and the accident only serves to remind us that even the very best mountaineer frequently takes his life in his hand.

S<sup>t</sup>. Fadana and Gamma, both experienced climbers, were lost when ascending the N. arête of the Grivola. A snow-storm overtook them at night and no trace of them was found until some time later.

As to the JOURNAL I must leave it to others to say whether it has maintained its position in the conditions due to the war.

On behalf of the Club I venture to offer thanks to Professor Bonney and to Sir Martin Conway for delightful reminiscences, as well as to several other willing helpers.

One announcement I make with the most complete satisfaction. Mr. Yeld has now served as Editor for 24 years, covering 15 volumes. He has deserved well of the Club. The Committee, anxious to find some special way of marking the obligation under which his labours have put us, decided to offer him the distinction of Honorary Member. It is not likely to become a precedent, since there is only one Yeld. I hope he will continue to give the Club the benefit of his guidance and experience.

Of Mr. Montagnier's services to the JOURNAL, I cannot say enough. He has got together from all kinds of sources, at great personal labour and through the good offices of Dr. Alexander Seiler and others, the original records of many important ascents, which were in great danger of perishing.

He has also acquired for the Club a series of Führerbücher of old guides, which are again original records of the highest value—the Bibles of our pursuit, as my enthusiastic friend, the late Mr. Wethered, called them. He has repeatedly presented to the Club books and documents of great value.

He has brought over for presentation to the Club the *Gazette de Lausanne* for 1786 to 1787, in which the interesting correspondence between Bourrit and others dealing with the first ascent of Mont Blanc appeared.

Without his splendid help we could not have kept the JOURNAL going. Moreover, his unflagging and enthusiastic diligence spurred me, who am prone to idleness, into fairly continuous work.

Though absent from its councils, he is ever eager in the service of the Club.

M. Paul Montandon has always placed his great Alpine knowledge at the disposal of the JOURNAL. I am indebted to him for photographs and much assistance.

Whereas in 1917 we published a volume of 873 pages, we

were compelled by the enormous increase in cost to issue only two numbers in 1918, and one number in 1919, making a volume of about 420 pages for the two years.

So long as present prices obtain, I think we must be content with one number a year. High prices naturally mean decreased demand. The Editors, with the willing aid available, can find material enough for more, but the old size of JOURNAL would mean an increase in the members' subscription. We are doubling the price to non-members.

An expression of opinion as to the future of the JOURNAL would be a useful indication to the Committee and Editors.

Alpine books have been few.

Canon Durham has written an animated account of his Alpine journeys. Mr. Weston's 'Playground of the Far East' takes us to the Japanese Alps, which he did so much to make into a playground for their own people. Dr. and Mrs. Workman have carried out a survey of the Siachen Glacier and recorded their expedition in a volume which I reviewed at length in the Journal. We are awaiting with keenest interest Mr. Freshfield's 'Life of De Saussure.'

Dr. Dübi is editing an amplified translation of the Pennine volumes of the 'Climbers' Guides.'

The volume from the Théodule to the Simplon has appeared in French and German, and the remaining volume is well advanced. Any helpful criticism of these is very welcome in view of revised editions.

It is interesting to note that many glaciers are in active advance. At Saas Fee hundreds of trees have had to be cut down, while at Grindelwald barns have been upset and pasture ploughed up by the invading ice.

As to the future of mountaineering, we must expect and ought to encourage independent climbing. This Club has tended to insist that enterprise should wait on experience, as I consider, *over* long. Experience is a bad *substitute* for enterprise. We have been unwilling, or have failed, to recognise the school our Welsh and Scotch and English mountains offer to our young men to overcome their *mountain shyness*, and to learn what can be done in rock-climbing and route-finding. A young man well schooled over here will approach any Alpine problem in a very different manner from what we did 40 years ago. Ice-work, which may be said to be the intellectual side of mountaineering, can only be learned in the Alps, but his apprenticeship to rock-work and route-finding will serve him in good stead when he goes to the Alps.



My good comrade Herbert Reade, in an able article in the *Climbers' Club Journal*, has pointed out the pitfalls and differences a young British-trained climber must expect to find on visiting the Alps. He has emphasised that while sureness of foot and a certain degree of technique may be learned at home, the *art* of mountaineering can only be *mastered* by continuous work under high mountain conditions and competent masters. There is no man more qualified to speak on this subject than one who once implied that he was my *so sorely tried* comrade!

We cannot ignore the fact that mountaineering as practised with the *full* approval of this Club has remained in leading strings longer than any other hard pursuit followed by active Englishmen. Good feeling towards a particular guide, or the difficulty of finding a companion of like powers, tastes, and better temper, has had much to do with this result. But this Club is getting old. We must study youth. Caution can be overdone. We must search out, encourage, and bring on young men—into the Club, on to the Committee—I have done what I could in the latter respect. I recommend my successor to do more. We have great traditions, a great past—look to it that we also have a great future—and *that* you cannot have if a majority of our candidates are already men of mature age.

Moreover, the great increase in guides' tariffs and travelling expenses will tend more and more to enforce guideless climbing, since our incomes by no means tend to increase proportionately. There must be no disapproving looks on our side.

There is some talk of an expedition to Mt. Everest, in which the R.G.S. are taking a leading part, no doubt in a measure through the suggestions of a most distinguished predecessor of mine whom we lent them for a season. The Club will give such an expedition every support in its power, and I trust there may be some young men among us able to take part.

We are meantime waiting until the Indian Government is rid of its frontier troubles, as, of course, their approval and material support are indispensable. The altitude record stands, I think, at 24,600 feet, and it is a very rash man who, with the facilities of transport of impedimenta and reconnoitring offered by small airships, will deny the possibility of overcoming the remaining 5000 feet.

It is to be hoped that the Swiss authorities will do what they can, and more than they did, to render the visit of English travellers to their country as free from formalities as possible.

The last five years have drawn the Allies very close together. It is not to be expected that we shall be prepared to enter into relations with the German Alpine Clubs, or to meet, except purely formally, German climbers. Tirolese and Austrians are on a somewhat different footing, as Englishmen with memories of many courtesies can hardly help showing.

I hope my eminent immediate predecessor will permit me to express the Club's supreme satisfaction at his appointment as Master of the Rolls. The whole country rates him high, but no higher than we do.

We are all much pleased that the S.M.C. is to have for its next President one of the best of good fellows and mountaineers—my very good friend Ling.

Gentlemen—I put off to-morrow my high estate. I am proud to have been President, by your favour, of this great Club.

You have, by your sympathy, made my position a delightful one. To many members of the Committee I am much indebted for sound advice and gentle application of the brake on what, age notwithstanding, I fear is a somewhat impetuous nature.

To you all I offer my very grateful thanks.

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NARRATIVES OF AN ASCENT OF MONT BLANC IN 1819.

By JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER AND WILLIAM HOWARD.

WITH A NOTE BY HENRY F. MONTAGNIER.

THE two papers reprinted here are undoubtedly the rarest of the seventeen narratives of ascents of Mont Blanc printed by English-speaking travellers during the first half of the last century. They are not even to be found in the remarkably rich collection of works on early mountaineering in the Library of the Alpine Club, and at the present time probably not a score of our members have ever seen them. Yet these two little pamphlets hold an almost unique place in the literature of our pastime. For, with the one exception of Beaufoy's paper on his ascent of Mont Blanc (read before the Royal Society in 1787, but not published until 1817), which Mr. Freshfield reprinted in this JOURNAL a few years ago (vol. xxix. pp. 323-333), they are the earliest accounts of the ascent of an Alpine snow-peak originally written in our language ;

indeed, it may be said without exaggeration that their publication marks the beginning of English Alpine literature.

The authors were two young American physicians, aged twenty-six and twenty-five respectively, who, after taking their medical degrees in the United States, had set out for a two years' visit to England and the Continent.

Dr. Jeremiah Van Rensselaer was born in Greenbush, Rensselaer County, in the State of New York on August 4, 1798. He was a descendant of a celebrated family of Dutch settlers who founded in 1637 the colony of Rensselaerwick on the Hudson, and who for nearly three centuries have played a prominent rôle in American social and public life. After graduating from Yale in the class of 1813, he took his medical degree in the University of New York in 1817, and continued his studies two years in the schools and hospitals of Edinburgh, London, and Paris, returning to New York in 1820 to take up the practice of his profession. For many years he was corresponding secretary of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, and in 1825 he published a treatise on geology which was highly esteemed in its time. In 1851, after a brilliant career of nearly thirty-two years, he gave up his professional work and retired to his estate on the Hudson, where, with the exception of a few years passed in Continental travel, he resided during the remainder of his life. He died on February 7, 1871, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, nearly fifty-two years after his memorable ascent of Mont Blanc.

According to the *American Medical Record* of April 1, 1871, Dr. Van Rensselaer was 'a polished and elegant scholar, a beloved physician, an upright citizen, a Christian gentleman, a man of honour and of noble aspirations.'

Dr. William Howard was born in Baltimore, in the State of Maryland in 1794. He took his medical degree in the University of Maryland in 1817, and after two years passed in study abroad returned to that institution as assistant professor of Natural Philosophy. A few years later he resigned this position in order to enter the service of the American Government as topographical engineer. He is said to have taken out the first patent in the United States for a locomotive. He died in 1884 at the early age of forty.<sup>1</sup>

If we include Dr. Paccard in the list, Van Rensselaer and

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<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for the above biographical details to the courtesy of my fellow-countrymen, Mr. Henry G. Bryant and Mr. Le Roy Jeffers, of the American Alpine Club.

Howard with their nine guides were the eighth party, excepting those composed only of Chamonix peasants, to attain the summit of Mont Blanc; the previous ascents having been effected in 1786 (Dr. Paccard), 1787 (De Saussure, followed a few days later by Beaufoy), 1788 (Woodley), 1802 (Dorthesen and Forneret), 1812 (Rodatz), and 1817 (Matzewsky). The leader of their expedition was the celebrated Joseph-Marie Couttet, the 'Capitaine du Mont Blanc,' who, although then only twenty-seven years of age, was already the most experienced and competent of the younger generation of Chamonix guides. The following year he was the leader of Dr. Hamel's ill-fated attempt on Mont Blanc, and his last ascent was made with Mr. J. D. Gardner's party in 1850. As he was still living in 1874, it is quite possible that a few of our older members who visited the Chamonix valley in the early seventies may still remember him.

It is interesting to read in their narratives that our travellers called on Dr. Paccard, who was still flourishing thirty-three years after his great ascent; and that Jacques Balmat accompanied them as far as the edge of the glacier. In his manuscript Journal, which is now one of the treasures of the Alpine Club Library, Paccard records their expedition as follows:—

'Dimanche 11 juillet 1819 deux américains avec neuf guides sont allés coucher aux grands mulets. Arrivés le lendemain au sommet du Mont-blanc à midi 20. Descendus à la montagne de la côte le même jour. Ils ont cassé mon thermomètre. C'étoit Mr. William Howard de Baltimore et le Dr. Vanranselaer de New York des états d'Amérique.'

The worthy doctor was misinformed, however, for by their own account the two climbers passed their second night out on the Grands Mulets, and as they ascended by the Pierre Pointue it would seem likely that they returned to Chamonix by the same route.

Van Rensselaer and Howard both seem to have had a little of the climbing instinct, for Howard refers to his 'clambering disposition' which had already led him to the summits of Etna and Vesuvius; and Van Rensselaer tells us that he had made several ascents in the Apennines. Nevertheless they do not seem to have found the ascent of Mont Blanc a particularly agreeable experience; in fact, Howard admits quite frankly that he felt no desire to embark upon a similar adventure in the future. And most of the travellers who followed

in their footsteps during the ensuing thirty years found that one expedition above the snow-line was quite enough to satisfy their curiosity for the rest of their lives. Their attitude is well described in the amusing lines quoted, and, I suspect, written, by Albert Smith in 1841 :—

‘ Full forty gentlemen, wealthy and bold,  
Have climbed up in spite of the labour and cold ;  
But of all that number there lives not one  
Who speaks of the journey as very good fun.’<sup>2</sup>

As a matter of fact, it is not until the latter fifties, when the founders of the Alpine Club appeared on the scene, that we find the ascent first described as really enjoyable sport. Clissold (1822), who made one of the most daring ascents of early times, says ‘ the coldness, fatigue, little rest for two nights, and that state of equanimity which had been requisite in surmounting so many dangers, rendered us incapable of fully enjoying the grandeur which was now displayed before us.’ Captain Markham Sherwill (1825) advised his friends strongly not to undertake the journey to the summit. Auldjo (1827) says : ‘ I was exhausted ; the sensation of weakness in the legs had become excessive : I was nearly choking from the dryness of my throat and the difficulty of breathing ; and my head was almost bursting with pain.’ Wilbraham (1830) tells of the ‘ apathy and indifference’ he felt on attaining the highest point. And in 1851 Albert Smith reached the top ‘ completely done up.’ ‘ I was stumbling about,’ he says, ‘ as though completely intoxicated, and planted my feet anywhere but in the right place. . . . I was so completely exhausted that, without looking around me, I fell down upon the snow and was asleep in an instant.’

Let us turn now to a narrative of the ascent of Mont Blanc in 1857 written by one of the fathers of the Alpine Club. In answer to the question ‘ Did the ascent repay you ?’ Mr. Hinchliff exclaims : ‘ To ask such a question of a true mountaineer is simply to insult him as completely as we should insult a pious man by asking him whether, after all, he really thought it worth while to go to heaven. Repay ? Repay for what ? We were neither sick nor sorry. We had not been fatigued or uncomfortable, and if time had permitted we should have liked

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<sup>2</sup> ‘ Loose Leaves from the Travellers’ Album at Chamonix.’ By Albert Smith. In *Bentley’s Miscellany*, 1841, vol. ix. p. 580.



to remain all day where we were, in the enjoyment of a happiness that was perfect.'<sup>3</sup>

Here we find at last the spirit of the modern mountaineer.

It was probably after a hasty perusal of the distressing tales of hardships and suffering endured by the early climbers of Mont Blanc that the editor of Murray's 'Handbook for Travellers in Switzerland and the Alps of Savoy' inserted on page 333 of the 1851 edition the following disparaging remarks on our sport :—

'The ascent of Mont Blanc is attempted by few ; of these the records are to be found at Chamouny. When Saussure ascended to make experiments at that height the motive was a worthy one ; but those who are impelled by curiosity alone, are not justified in risking the lives of their guides. The pay tempts these poor fellows to encounter the danger, but their safety, devoted as they are to their employers, is risked for a poor consideration. It is no excuse that the employer thinks his own life worthless ; he ought to think of the safety of others : yet scarcely a season passes without the attempt. It is a somewhat remarkable fact that a large proportion of those who have made this ascent have been persons of unsound mind.'

These absurd lines were reprinted in the editions of 1852, 1854, and 1856, and the statement regarding the persons of unsound mind was finally omitted in the edition of 1858, probably in consequence of a formal protest from the Alpine Club which had been founded the year before. By way of comment on the views expressed by this worthy editor, I need only recall the fact that the task of editing several subsequent editions of Murray's excellent Handbook has been entrusted successively to two of the most distinguished mountaineers of modern times—Mr. Freshfield, who has made three ascents of Mont Blanc, and the Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge, who has been to the summit no less than five times.

HENRY F. MONTAGNIER.

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\* 'Poaching on Mont Blanc a Dozen Years Ago,' in *Fraser's Magazine* for July 1869, vol. lxxx. pp. 97-111 (anonymous, but by Mr. T. W. Hinchliff, the seventh President of the Alpine Club). Mr. Hinchliff's party consisting of himself, Mr. Robert Walters and the guides Zacharie Cachat, Jean-Pierre Payot, Michel Simond and Pierre-Tobie Simond, made the ascent on July 30, 1857. Mr. Walters was present at the Jubilee Dinner of the A.C. in 1907.

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C

ACCOUNT OF A JOURNEY TO THE SUMMIT OF MONT BLANC.

By DR. JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER, OF NEW YORK.<sup>1</sup>

TO PROFESSOR SILLIMAN.

GENEVA, July 19, 1819.

DEAR Sir,—I take the liberty to send you a hasty sketch of a short tour that I completed a few days ago, including the Vale of Chamouny—and an ascent to the top of Mont Blanc. As this latter is a journey not often made, and never before by an American traveller, I trust no apology will be thought necessary.

As I have suffered much both from heat and cold, and am still labouring under an affection of the eyes and face, you will excuse such errors as may occur in orthography &c. As to the statement, I copy it from notes made on the mount, and soon after my arrival in the Vale.

With much respect, I have the honour to be

Yours truly,

JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER.

Returning from Italy by the grand road of the Simplon, which, more than his victories or reverses, will contribute to the fame of Bonaparte, we enjoyed the scenery of the Valais and the south side of the Lake before arriving at Geneva. We had scarcely finished with the curiosities of the place when my friend and fellow-traveller, Mr. W. Howard, of Baltimore, proposed a visit to the Vale of Chamouny.

This delightful valley, the most elevated in Europe, and almost separated from the world, lies 18 leagues S.E. of Geneva—it is 5 leagues long, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  a league broad, and is covered during the few months of summer with the most luxuriant vegetation. To the N. rises the chain of Red Needles (Aiguilles Rouges); to the S. the gigantic mass of Mont Blanc; to the N.E. is the Col de Balme; and to the S.W. the mountains

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<sup>1</sup> [Reprinted from the *American Journal of Sciences and Arts*, for November 1820 (vol. ii. pp. 1–11). I am deeply indebted to Mr. G. A. Solly for kindly placing his copy of this paper at my disposal.]

of Lacha and of Vaudagne. The river Arve, joined by Arvieron, that gushes impetuously from beneath the glacier des Bois, flows rapidly through the length of the Vale; and receives the tributary streams of the glaciers that increase its size only to augment the volume of the Rhone, into which it pours its accumulated waters. The beauty of the Vale, the fertility of its soil, the innocence and simplicity of its inhabitants, and the singularity of the landscape, in which mountains of ice alternate with fields of flowers, have long drawn the attention of travellers. Each glacier, each needle, each mountain forms a distinct curiosity, and a whole season might pass pleasantly enough in contemplating Nature in her mildest and in her most chilling moods—for she smiles and frowns alternately on the Vale.

The most interesting object that strikes the attention, where everything is worthy of notice, is Mont Blanc. The frozen glaciers, that like feet seem to support its huge mass in the air, while its snow-capped summit is lost in the heavens, form a singular contrast to the green fields in which they rest. Having already visited some of the highest points of the Apennines, in traversing the ridge as it extends through the Tuscan, the Roman, and the Neapolitan States into Sicily, I felt a desire to stand on the lofty mount before me, and mentioned it to my companion. The difficulty of the undertaking, the many failures, and the small number of those who have succeeded, seemed at first very discouraging—but we resolved upon the attempt and sent out for guides. These it was not difficult to procure; for as the inhabitants considered it a mark of courage and perseverance, it is ever thought an honour to have been on the summit, and is mentioned in praise of him who has happily attained the object. It was therefore difficult to choose,—but we took those who had before made the attempt. The women too were to be consulted, for, however anxious they might be that their sons should procure the honour, they were loth to let their husbands encounter so many perils.

In vain did the guides represent to us the dangers and privations of the undertaking—in vain expatiate on the heat, the cold, the fatigue, and above all on the many failures. We conversed with Balmat and Paccard, the two first who ascended, and, having previously agreed with a master guide, appointed the next day for the ascent.

At 3 o'clock A.M. on the 11th inst. mass was said for a successful journey and a safe return, and at 5 we commenced

our way—our guides preceded with the necessary articles and we followed, confident of success. For a league our way lay through fields of grain, and then commenced the woody region that extends double the distance up the mountain. Here we found ourselves at the edge of the Glacier Bossons (one of the grandest of the mount) and for two leagues mounted near to its side. The way was painful and difficult, winding on the mountain side, and crossing streams that pour constantly from the higher regions. We had now ascended 5 leagues, and were about to quit the land; here commenced the region of eternal ice. Balmat, the veteran hero of the hoary mount, who first placed foot on its frozen summit, had thus far accompanied us: his age prevented him from ascending farther, and, wishing us a safe return, he retraced our mountain path. Thus far we had followed a kind of path, but, once on the snow, a bleak region extended before us—no footstep marked the white surface—no sign of life or animation arose to cheer us. Here, too, commenced the dangers of the way, and we were forced to follow in regular succession:—first went a guide with two long poles to search for crevices, that we might avoid them—then followed a man with an axe to cut foot-holes in the ice; then came two who changed with the above, and formed a relief: next followed a man with the ladder—at some little distance I followed tied by a rope round the waist to two guides, one of whom preceded, the other followed me—and lastly came Mr. H. tied in the same manner to two other guides. Each of the men carried a knapsack with provisions, blankets, sheets for a tent, cords, coals, a pan to melt snow in, a chafing-dish, bellows, &c., &c.; and each of us was armed with a pole about 9 feet long, with a sharp iron spike in the end, to support ourselves and to prevent us from falling.—Our line of march seemed rather formidable as we ascended and descended the broken glaciers.

We encountered many crevices, some of which were distinctly seen; others more than half hid by the snow. Occasionally masses of ice had sunk, and left the remaining wall rising 40 or 50 feet above us: in such cases it was necessary to search the lowest end of the wall, and ascend by the ladder, or by cutting stepping holes in the side. This, however, could be attempted only where the wall was not more than 20 feet high, as our ladder was only of that length. Where, besides the wall, there was a crevice at the bottom, the ascent was indeed dreadful; for, while crossing a gulf that yawned 150 or 200 feet beneath us, we were climbing the ladder placed against

the side of ice, where the least slip must have precipitated us to immediate death. Where the sides of the crevice were of equal height, the ladder was laid down, and we then crawled over on all fours. In a few cases it occurred that an arched bridge of snow connected the sides, and here it behoved us to tread lightly and with caution, lest, breaking through, we should have sunk into a pit from which it would have been impossible to return. Often frustrated in our course by unforeseen crevices and walls, we were forced to make a lengthened march; but at last clambered up a solitary rock that rises from the snow, 8 leagues from the village. It is called the Grand Mulet, and having served several travellers as a resting-place, was chosen by us as the only rock on which it was practicable to sleep. It is composed of quartz and micaceous schist, rising in perpendicular laminæ 60 or 70 feet above the ice, and 7,800 feet above the level of the sea. A few pieces of schist arranged into a kind of platform afford a tolerable resting-place for him who is not over fastidious on such a journey. On one side rises the sharp Aiguille de Midi, and on the other the Dôme de Gouté, that seems to soar far above Mt. Blanc. It was yet early in the afternoon, and the sun beat down so powerfully as to render the heat very inconvenient: occasionally, however, a cloud of thick mist enveloped us—it was then extremely chilling and uncomfortable. While on the Grand Mulet we observed a beautiful butterfly, of the most vivid and brilliant colours, making its way towards the summit of the mountain. At 6 P.M. Réaumur's thermometer stood at 4° (41° of Fahrenheit) above freezing. With the aid of a blanket, and a sheet placed so as to keep off the wind, we formed a tolerable tent, and lay down to refresh ourselves. Night soon closed upon us, and rendered our situation still more appalling:—the dead silence of darkness was broken only by the groans of the weary, or by the loud thunder of a fallen avalanche that roused us from an imperfect sleep.

On the 12th at 2 A.M. the guides began to make preparations, and at 3 we resumed our journey. A road had been cut for some distance the evening before, and, the snow being hard, we advanced without great fatigue or danger, to the Grand Plateau, a distance of 4 leagues: it is a plain, with a more gentle elevation extending about a league towards the summit. Here we rested some time, and one of the guides found himself unable to proceed. We, however, went on after taking some refreshment: the air was much rarefied, and the sun exceedingly warm. At the end of the Plateau began the steepest

ascent: dreadful avalanches that seemed falling with their own weight hung over our way, while fearful chasms yawned beneath us. The elevation was too great to allow us to ascend in a straight line, our path therefore was in a zigzag course towards the top, every step being cut in the ice with a hatchet. The path was so difficult and the rarefaction of the air so great, that even the stoutest guides could not advance more than fifteen steps without stopping to rest—and Mr. H. found himself so much incommoded that we feared he would have to return. His perseverance enabled him to proceed, and at 11 o'clock we arrived at the Petit Mulet, a granitic rock that just shows itself above the snow; here some of the guides being much fatigued we rested some time. From this rock the ascent is not steep, but very fatiguing, on account of the rarefaction of the air—we, however, reached the summit at half-past 12—and stood upon the highest point in Europe. The top is formed by a ridge running N.E. and S.W. about 12 feet above the little plain that lies to the south. As to the depth of snow upon it we are unable to form a conjecture. Bonaparte, after many fruitless attempts, succeeded in having placed here a pyramid 12 feet high. It was visible for three years, but has gradually disappeared, and has not been seen for some years.<sup>2</sup> In the sun the thermometer was at the freezing-point; in the shade 3° of Réaumur below it; (25°.25 of Fahrenheit). A bright sun shone on us, through a vault of indigo blue, in which not a spot was obscured by a cloud. To the N., at the distance of nearly 100 miles, rose the black ridge of Jura; farther east lay the mountains of Underwalden and of Uri; to the E. St. Gothard and the Simplon; St. Bernard and Monte Rosa seemed to stand at our side, and Piedmont to stretch at our feet.—A light floating vapour hid from us the vales of Lombardy and of France.—On one side the happy valley of Chamouny lay beneath and the little village shone in the smiling plain, beset with fields and woods;—on the other the Valè d'Aoste, with her cheerful river, extended her green surface to relieve the eye. The glaciers of Bossons, des Bois, d'Argentière and of Tour seemed sliding into the meadows—while the frozen waves of the Mer de Glace seemed hushed into a calm,—and the Montanvert, with the needles of Dru, Géant, Charmoz, Midi, &c., showed their splintered

<sup>2</sup> [Pictet wrote in a footnote to the French translation: 'Nous avons lieu de croire cette anecdote fort apocryphe.' There is no doubt, however, that the ascent in question was actually made.]

pinnacles far below us. We remained an hour and a half on the small plain to the south of the crowning ridge, and here four of our guides laid themselves on the snow and slept for some minutes. We did not feel fatigued, but found our respiration much quickened and our pulse greatly accelerated; this was particularly the case with Mr. Howard, who is of a fuller habit than myself. Though we had provisions, none of us felt an inclination to eat; but our thirst was great, and we found vinegar and water the most refreshing beverage. We fired a pistol three times nearly filled with powder, and well wadded; the report was that of a squib.

At 2 we began our descent with an intention to examine the different rocks that broke through the snow. The highest is about 350 feet below the summit, formed of granitic tables, that lay loose on each other, and of which feldspar is the predominant ingredient. The Petit Mulet is of the same formation—and I may here add, that to be minute would only be to give you what has already been printed.

The descent was perhaps more fatiguing than the ascent had been, and far more alarming, for we now saw the crevices that yawned beneath us; and the reflection of a bright sun from the glistening snow almost prevented us from seeing our path, the least deviation from which would have been inevitable death. Part of one of the avalanches that threatened us in our ascent had already fallen and lay scattered over our path, and the part that yet hung suspended above us seemed ready to follow its fallen half. Dreadful indeed was the silence in which, with hurried step, we hastened down the sidehill. Fearing to raise a look from the pathway, and scarcely daring to breathe, we arrived near the bottom. The danger being now past, we turned to survey the hanging mass;—the eye was soon satisfied—and in speechless meditation we resumed our way.

At the Grand Plateau we found the guide who had returned—and it was here we discovered that our thermometer was broken. It was exceedingly hot, and we rested only a few minutes to gain breath, and refresh ourselves. Thus far the ice and frozen snow had formed a good path—but the influence of a sun, now more powerful than I ever felt, had melted the snow; and after leaving the Plateau, we sunk every third step, nearly to the waist. It was of no use to send the guides to break the way, nor to seek a new road—it was immaterial if we followed their track, or made one for ourselves—we still sunk. Our progress was further interrupted by some crevices

that we had not seen in the morning—and being wide, with one side higher than the other, our ladder was of no use. At these places we sat on the snow, and slid down so fast as not to break the frail covering of the crevice. This was the most fatiguing part of the whole journey, and we were happy once more to climb the steep sides of the Grand Mulet. The sun had set upon the valley, but its rays yet beamed upon our elevated rock—its effects had been severely felt—and though scorching during the day, it seemed in pity to lend its lingering light to shorten the dreariness of the night.

Fatigue had nearly lulled us to sleep, when thinking on the last journey of the morrow, some of the guides turned to see the path by which we had ascended the day before. While yet following its traces they saw part of it lost in an avalanche—a mass had fallen in, and our road was gone. Few and unrefreshing were the hours of our repose—the cold was excessive—and some coals in the chafing-dish, kept constantly enflamed by the bellows, served to keep us from freezing. Our faces pained us almost intolerably—our eyes were so inflamed that we could scarcely distinguish an object at the distance of a few feet—our fingers and toes were nearly benumbed—and the whole system disordered, not so much from fatigue as from a strange influence of the atmosphere.

Early on the morning of the 13th we began the labour of the last day's journey. Our path had been partly lost in an avalanche, and partly dissolved in the melting sun of yesterday—and we followed the track of the chamois, that has never been known to err. With much difficulty could we discern our way, as we were nearly blind—the crape and goggles we had worn the day before were now of no avail. We happily quitted the ice soon after the sun shot its first rays on the mountain we had left—having been forty-five hours on the frozen surface. Happy were we all, when, arriving again at the woody region, we heard the tinkling of the herd—we reposed a few minutes in the shepherd's hut—and arrived at Chamouny at 10 o'clock.

We went immediately into a darkened room—and after washing in cream, went to bed, but not to rest. Our eyelids were glued together, and our faces entirely blistered. When the sun was down, we rose for a few minutes—and again lay down. Our fatigue overcame our pain—and exhausted nature sunk to sleep:—we awoke in the morning much refreshed—so that on the 14th we came to Geneva in a darkened carriage. The skin has fallen from our faces, which are now, though



raw, much better—the inflammation of the eyes is subsiding, but still troublesome and confines us to the house.

The minute and accurate observations of Mons. de Saussure have left but little for future travellers. His genius for a time seemed to reside in the Alps, and it was his delight to stand in reality or in imagination on those elevated summits from which the world seemed to lie below him. His daring spirit led him to climb the most difficult and dangerous points—and it was on one of these, the Col du Géant, that in 1788, he passed fifteen days in performing a series of physical and meteorological experiments of the most interesting nature—at the elevation of 10,578 feet above the sea. His researches on the different summits are of the same kind, and have been found accurate by the test of succeeding observations. Our ascent to the summit of Mont Blanc, then, may be considered a journey of curiosity: but it was our wish to examine the temperature and rarefaction of the atmosphere, to obtain an exact knowledge of glaciers and of the frozen region, and to survey the rocks. Our thermometer was broken the second day, when after taking the temperature at the top, we were about to notice it at stated distances on our descent. Our vessels of air from the summit were injured in sliding down the declivities or in wading through the snow. As to the rocks little can be said of them: the nature of the mountain has long been well known, and it would be useless to enlarge upon the accounts already given. Thus our journey has been of no avail in adding to our knowledge of the rarefaction of air at the top, yet we are satisfied with having made the attempt. It may be ascertained by a barometer, which we had not, or by filling *many* vessels, so that some at least might be brought down safe. This too would allow a portion for analysis—I know not that the attempt has been made.

Mons. de Saussure found the absolute height of Mont Blanc to be 14,700 feet; Deluc made it 14,346; Prof. Pictet says it is 14,556; while M. Tralles, who has measured it three times with the same result, makes it 14,793 feet; making its absolute height 5,355 feet less than that of Chimborazo; but its relative height is greater, as it rises 11,532 feet above the vale of Chamouny, while Chimborazo is elevated only 11,232 feet above the valley of Tapia—making a difference of 300 feet relative height.

It was in 1760 that M. de Saussure seems first to have thought of measuring Mont Blanc, and offered a reward to the person who should discover a way to the summit. His

offers were sufficient to induce many to make the attempt—and for twenty-five years, unsuccessfully. The most important trials are recorded as follows:—

The first attempt was made in 1762 by an inhabitant of Chamouny; he failed, as he only reached the glacier Bossons.

In 1775 four men, following the same route, advanced to the Mount de la Cole, running parallel to the glacier Bossons.

In 1783 three others tried the same path, but were forced to return by a strong desire to sleep, which would have been fatal, if indulged.

In the same year, M. Bourrit of Geneva was driven back by a snow storm. The following year he was again frustrated by the violence of cold and fatigue.

In 1785 M. de Saussure and M. Bourrit made another attempt with fifteen guides. They arrived the evening of the second day at the Needle de la Côte, at the elevation of 11,442 feet above the sea: the softness of the snow and their fatigue made them return.

In 1786 six men made another trial; but were forced to relinquish the enterprise. One of them, named J. Balmat, wandered from the rest, and passed the night alone on the glacier—in the morning he found himself near the top. He returned and suffered much from an affection of the face and eyes. He was attended by Dr. Paccard, and in gratitude offered to conduct him to the summit—which he did a few weeks afterwards. They found it extremely cold—their provisions froze in their pockets, and the ink in their inkhorns—they remained only a few minutes, and descended to the village in a shocking condition. Dr. P. had his hands and feet frozen—and Balmat's face was disfigured for eight days.

The same year de Saussure tried again without success.

The year following he made another attempt with seventeen guides—and on the third day of his journey reached the summit. He passed there five hours in making those observations and experiments that have gained him so much and so deserved reputation. On the fifth day they returned to Chamouny.

The next day M. Bourrit made his fourth attempt, but was forced to return.

In 1788 he tried again with Mr. Woodley, an Englishman, and M. Camper, a Hollander—a storm dispersed the party,

but Mons. B. with three guides gained the summit. They descended immediately. Mr. Woodley had his hands and feet frozen—M. Bourrit was forced to use ice applications for thirteen days—the guides suffered from frozen fingers and toes.

In 1787 Col. Beaufoy, an English officer, gained the summit, and returned with the fear of losing his sight—he however recovered.

In 1792 four Englishmen undertook the task—but were forced to return—all of them much hurt. One guide had his leg broken, and another fractured his skull.

In 1802 Messrs. Forneret and d'Ostern with seven guides gained the top, and declared on their return that nothing could induce them to make another attempt.

In 1816 Count du Lusy, a Russian, ascended a little above the Petit Mulet, but was obliged to return. His feet were so frozen that the skin came off with his stockings; and he was long forced to use crutches. Two of his guides were frozen nearly to the same degree.<sup>3</sup>

In 1817 Count Malazesky, a Pole, gained the top with eleven guides—his nose and ears were frozen.

There have been various attempts made by persons who returned after the first or on the second day; such trials have not been recorded.

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\* [Comte de Lusi was very probably a French *émigré* serving in the Prussian Guards. He published a narrative of his expedition entitled 'Voyage sur le Mont Blanc entrepris le 15 septembre 1816 (Vienne: 1816. 16mo. pp. 54) which is now extremely rare. His guides were Joseph Marie Couttet, Frédéric Balmat, Jean Pierre Tairraz, Pierre Joseph Folliguet, Jacques Couttet, Michel Paccard and Mathieu Frasserand.

M. de Lusi tells of meeting one of the guides who accompanied the four Englishmen in the 1792 attempt on Mont Blanc: 'Au moment où nous allions partir, un des habitants accourut vers moi, et me fit voir un trou énorme qu'il avait à la tête, ayant subi l'opération du trépan. Il me fit l'observation encourageante qu'il avait reçu cette blessure en faisant le voyage que j'allais entreprendre.

Another attempt on Mont Blanc hitherto unknown to Alpine historians is briefly recorded in the *Gazette de Lausanne* of August 12, 1814. 'Genève 10 août. Trois anglois ont essayé de parvenir ces jours derniers à la cime du Mont Blanc; ils étoient accompagnés par 18 guides; mais arrêtés dans leur route par les crevasses, ils ont été forcés de revenir à Chamonix.']

NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY TO THE SUMMIT OF MONT  
BLANC MADE IN JULY 1819.

By WM. HOWARD, M.D.

THE account of the following journey was written a few days after its execution, while the author was confined to his chamber by the inconvenience he had suffered, and it was then penned for the gratification of his immediate friends, and without any view to publication. The partiality of friends, however, having permitted it, during his absence, to appear in the *Analectic Magazine* for May 1820, it excited more attention than he could have anticipated, which has induced the author to correct the errors arising from haste and other sources, and to republish it in the present form.<sup>1</sup>

Baltimore *April* 1821.

Geneva, *July* 1819.

YOU, my dear friend, who are well acquainted from my infancy with my clambering disposition, which, within these few months, has carried me to the top of both Vesuvius and Ætna, will not be much surprised to learn that I have attempted, with success, to mount to the summit of Mont Blanc: an aerial journey which the sight of this mountain has inspired many persons with a wish to accomplish; but in which few have engaged, and still fewer have succeeded. I am somewhat afraid that you will condemn the expedition as a wild one, and will justly consider the gratification of our curiosity, which was, unfortunately, the only object we attained, as an inadequate recompense for our toil and danger; but you have no cause to fear my embarking in similar adventures in future. Having reached a spot, undoubtedly the highest in Europe, and, with the exception of the Himalaya mountains in India, the highest in the Old World, my curiosity is completely gratified, and there is scarcely any possibility of my meeting with an enterprise of this nature, of sufficient

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<sup>1</sup> [The narrative was first printed under the title 'A Visit to the Summit of Mont Blanc, in a Letter from an American Traveller to his Friends in the United States.' It was reprinted under the above title as a separate volume (12mo. pp. 49, 1 plate) in Baltimore in 1821.]

NARRATIVE  
OF  
A JOURNEY  
TO THE  
Summit of Mont Blanc,

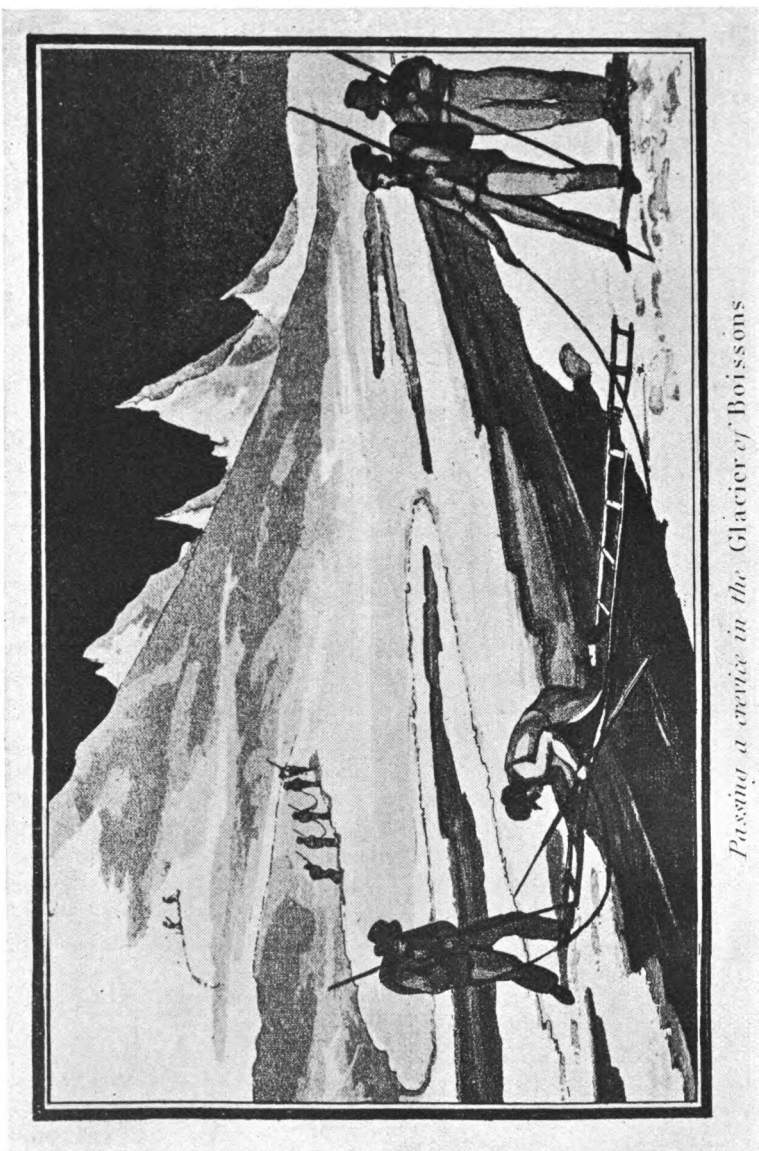
MADE IN JULY, 1819.

BY W.M. HOWARD, M. D.

"Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains.  
"They crown'd him long ago,  
"On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
"With a diadem of snow."

BALTIMORE :  
PUBLISHED BY FIELDING LUCAS, JR.  
J. Robinson, printer.  
1821.

FACSIMILE OF FRONT COVER



*Passing a crevasse in the Glacier of Boissons*

BACK COVER

magnitude to renew its excitement : since five of the loftiest of the Alleghanies piled on each other would scarcely reach the height I have attained. To give you a correct idea of the nature of our undertaking I will begin with a concise account of this king of the Alps, and of the various attempts that have been made to reach its summit.

Mont Blanc is situated amidst some of the highest mountains of Savoy, forming a part of the great chain of the Alps, above which, however, it raises far its snowy head, as with a dignified air of conscious triumph. It is this white head, which its elevation renders doubly bright, that gives its name. On the north side of the mountain, and immediately at its foot, is the valley of Chamouny, which is sixteen leagues south from Geneva, and is much frequented in the summer season by the inhabitants of that city, and strangers, who throng to this enchanted vale, to enjoy the coolness of the air, and to view its stupendous glaciers, several of which are formed by the snow and ice gliding down from Mont Blanc itself. On the south-east side is the valley of Entrèves, which separates Mont Blanc both from the Great and the Little St. Bernard, and through which runs a small river whose waters join the Po below Turin, while the Arva, which flows through Chamouny, joins the Rhone near Geneva. These rivers finally discharge themselves into the sea, at the distance of several hundred miles from each other : the one into the Mediterranean near Marseilles, and the other into the Adriatic near Venice. The chain of Alps, of which Mont Blanc forms a part, runs from N.E. to S.W. and is partly surmounted in its neighbourhood by sharp-pointed rocks, whose sides are too steep for the snow to rest upon, and of which seven, rising abruptly to a great height, have the appropriate name of the 'Needles of Chamouny.'

The height of Mont Blanc, according to the observations of Saussure, is 14,790 French feet above the level of the sea (about 15,500 English feet, or something less than 3 miles), which is only 5,300 less than that of Chimborazo, the summit of which has never been reached ; on the other hand, its relative height above the surrounding country is greater ; for Mont Blanc is 11,500 above the valley of Chamouny, while Chimborazo, according to Humboldt, is only 11,200 above the plain of Tapia, at its foot. It is calculated that, from this height, the eye could reach sixty-eight leagues, or about 170 of our miles, without being intercepted by the convexity of the earth. Mont Blanc is seen from Lyons in

all its magnificence ; from the mountains of Burgundy, from Dijon, and even from Langrès, sixty-five leagues distant in a straight line : M. Saussure thought he recognised the mountain of Caume, near Toulon.

In 1760 and 1761, Saussure, the celebrated philosopher of Geneva, then engaged in examining the natural history of the Alps, promised a considerable reward to any person who should succeed in finding a practicable path to the summit, offering even to pay for the lost time of those who made ineffectual efforts. The first who undertook this was Pierre Simon, a hunter of Chamouny, in 1762<sup>a</sup> ; but he was unsuccessful. In 1775, four men of the same village endeavoured for the same object, and with as ill success, to follow the ridge of the Montagne de la Côte, which runs parallel to the Glacier of Bossons. In 1788, three others followed the same track, but were attacked by an increasing disposition to sleep, from which they could only relieve themselves by returning. M. Bourrit, of Geneva, made two ineffectual attempts the same year,<sup>a</sup> and the following year another, accompanied by Saussure, his own son, and fifteen guides.

In June 1786, six men of the valley of Chamouny, renewed the effort to reach the summit, but fatigue and cold forced them to renounce it ; one of them, however, Jacques Balmat, separating from his companions to search for crystals, and, having lost himself, was prevented by a storm from rejoining them, and compelled to pass the night on the snow, unprovided and alone ; youth, however, and the vigour of his constitution, saved his life. In the morning he perceived the top at no great distance, and having the whole day before him to provide for his descent, he examined leisurely the approaches to it, and observed one that appeared more accessible than any he had hitherto seen. At his return to Chamouny, he was taken ill, in consequence of his great exposure, and was attended by Dr. Paccard, the physician of the village, to whom he communicated his discovery, and offered, in gratitude for his care, to guide him to the summit of Mont Blanc.

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<sup>a</sup> [De Saussure mentions two attempts by Pierre Simon ('*Voyages*,' 8vo. ed. vol. iv. p. 389) ; but Van Rensselaer and Howard are, I believe, the first writers who give the date. Their information was probably obtained from de Saussure's friend Marc-Auguste Pictet whose acquaintance they made in Geneva.]

<sup>a</sup> [As a matter of fact, Bourrit's only attempt in 1783 was made with Dr. Paccard. See '*A.J.*' vol. xxiv. pp. 419-423.]



In consequence of this, Jacques Balmat and Dr. Paccard set out from Chamouny on August 7, the same year, and slept on the top of the Montagne de la Côte. The next day they experienced great difficulties and excessive fatigue, and were long doubtful of the ultimate event of their enterprise; but finally, at 6.30 P.M. they reached the pinnacle of the mountain, in sight of many visitors who were at Chamouny watching their progress with telescopes. The cold was so intense, that provision was frozen in their pockets, the ink congealed in their inkhorns, and the mercury in Fahrenheit's thermometer sunk to  $18\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ . They remained about half an hour on the top, regained at midnight the Montagne de la Côte, and, after two hours' repose, set out for Chamouny, where they arrived at 8 A.M. with their lips swollen, their faces excoriated, and their eyes much inflamed; and it was some time before they recovered from these disagreeable effects.

As soon as the intelligence of this success reached Saussure at Geneva, he determined on making a similar attempt: which he in fact did the same year, but was compelled by unfavourable weather to return. He was, however, not discouraged, but as the season was now far advanced, he postponed his operations until the ensuing summer. Accordingly, on August 1, 1787, he again set out from Chamouny, accompanied by his servant and eighteen guides, carrying a tent, a bed, ladders, cords, provisions, and philosophical instruments.

The party arrived early the same day at the Montagne de la Côte, where they passed the night. The next day, notwithstanding an increase of dangers and difficulties, they passed under the Dôme de Gouté, and reached a platform, or small plain, at the height of 11,790 ft. above the sea, where they pitched their tent in the snow, and passed the night. The following morning (August 3), the snow was so hard, and the ascent so steep, that they were compelled to cut their footsteps with a hatchet, and it was only by proceeding with the greatest caution that they were enabled to pass this dangerous acclivity with safety. They, however, persevered, and reached the summit about an hour before noon, in view of many persons who were observing them from Chamouny. M. Saussure turned his eyes to the house where his mother \*

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\* [Our author is mistaken here, for de Saussure's mother, as far as I am aware, never visited the Chamonix valley. His wife and two sisters-in-law, Mmes. Turrettini and Tronchin were, however, in the village during his ascent.]

and sisters were watching his progress with a telescope, and had the satisfaction of seeing the waving of a flag, which was the signal they had agreed to make, as soon as they should be assured of his safety. The latter part of his ascent was the slowest and most fatiguing, owing to the difficulty of breathing, occasioned by the rarity of the air: the stoutest of his guides could not take more than thirty steps without stopping to take breath. No one had the least appetite, but all were much tormented by thirst. The guides pitched the tent, in which M. Saussure remained four hours making a number of observations. At 3.30, the party began to descend, and slept 1,100 ft. lower than the preceding night. The next day they arrived, without any accident, at Chamouny.

This successful expedition of Saussure, and the interesting account he published of it, inspired many persons with a wish to accomplish the same task; but they were generally soon deterred by an examination into the difficulties attending its execution, and returned satisfied with a view from the valleys below, of the terrific glaciers, and everlasting snows, which defend the approaches to the summit. The following are the principal attempts that have since been made, and it will be perceived that, of these few, only a part have succeeded.

On August 8, 1787, five days after M. Saussure's return, Colonel Beaufoy, an Englishman, set out from Chamouny for Mont Blanc, accompanied by ten guides. He reached the top the following day, and returned the third day to the village, with his face and eyes so inflamed that he nearly lost his sight in consequence. As he was not properly provided with instruments, he was unable to add much to the observations which had been made by Saussure. He, however, determined the latitude of the summit to be  $45^{\circ} 49' 59''$ .

The year following these two journeys (1788), Mr. Bourrit, of Geneva, in company with his son, two other gentlemen, and a number of guides, attempted the ascent of Mont Blanc. The party was dispersed by a storm, and only Mr. Bourrit, his son, and three guides, succeeded in reaching the top, where the violence of the cold compelled them to abridge their stay to a few minutes.\* While there, Mr. Bourrit thought

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\* [Here again Howard was misinformed, for only Woodley with Jacques Balmat and three other guides succeeded in reaching the summit. See 'A.J.' vol. xxv. pp. 616-617, and vol. xxx. pp. 119-126. Bourrit describes Woodley as 'le fils du gouverneur de l'Amérique

he perceived the sea in the direction of Genoa; but the immense distance rendered the objects at the horizon too indistinct to be certain of it. The whole party returned to Chamouny in a terrible condition. One of Mr. Bourrit's companions, who had lost himself, suffered dreadfully, as well as the guides who were with him, and returned with his feet and hands frozen, while some of the company, who were more fortunate, had only their fingers and ears in the same condition. Mr. Bourrit was obliged to wash for thirteen days in ice water, to restore the use of his limbs, which had suffered from the extreme cold.

In 1792,\* four Englishmen undertook the same journey, but were prevented, by an accident, from proceeding farther than the Montagne de la Côte, where, unfortunately, one of the guides had his leg broken, and another his skull driven in: they themselves were all more or less wounded. A false step of one of the foremost of the party upon a loose rock, which brought it and a number of others down upon his companions, was the cause of this accident.

M. Forneret, of Lausanne, and M. d'Ortern' set out on August 10, 1802, with seven guides for Mont Blanc, and, notwithstanding a storm, reached the summit the following day.<sup>7</sup> They remained there only twenty minutes, and returned on the 12th to Chamouny, protesting that nothing in the world could tempt them to undertake again the same expedition.

In August 1808, Jacques Balmat, surnamed Mont Blanc, from his having been the first to discover the way to the summit, safely conducted thither fifteen of the inhabitants of Chamouny, one of whom was a woman.<sup>8</sup>

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Angloise,' and Mr. C. E. Mathews adds that his father was Governor of the Leeward Islands. It is to be hoped that some member of this Club with a taste for research will follow up this clue and tell us something more about this traveller who was the second Englishman to set foot on the summit of a high peak in the Alps.

\* [Howard's authority for this statement was evidently a brief note added by Professor M. A. Pictet to his translation of Van Rensselaer's narrative in the 'Bibliothèque Britannique' of Geneva, vol. xiv. p. 234. Unluckily the names of these travellers have not come down to us.]

<sup>7</sup> [For D'Orthern read Dorthesen. See 'A.J.' vol. xxv. pp. 617-618 and vol. xxx. pp. 127-129.]

<sup>8</sup> [The date of this ascent is stated by Balmat himself, in a MS. note discovered some years ago to have been July 14, 1808. His companions were Ferdinand and Jean, his two sons, Victor and

About this time also he returned with two of his companions, and placed on the top an obelisk of wood, twelve feet in height, (which they brought up in pieces) to serve in the trigonometrical survey of the country, that was then being made.\*

In 1812, M. Rodasse, a banker of Hamburg, undertook and accomplished the same journey without any accident.

On September 16, 1816, the Comte de Lucy, a Frenchman, succeeded, notwithstanding the severity of the cold he experienced, in attaining a rock only 600 ft. lower than the summit of Mont Blanc. He was there, however, so entirely overcome with cold and fatigue, that he was unable to proceed this short distance, and compelled, with much reluctance, to return. On reaching the valley he was unable to walk, but was carried by his guides to the inn, where his feet proved to be so much frozen that, on drawing his boot, the skin peeled off and remained in it. Two of his guides were also severely frozen.

Count Malzeski, a Pole, left Chamouny August 5, 1818, for Mont Blanc, accompanied by eleven guides, reached the summit the following day, and returned in safety the third, without suffering much more inconvenience than having his nose frozen.

During our visit to Chamouny, in the beginning of this month, my friend Dr. Van Rensselaer and myself, in our various excursions to the glaciers, and other scenes of the valley, had frequently opportunities of conversing with the guides who had participated in these journeys, and among them with old Balmat, the Columbus of the Mont Blanc. The result was that our curiosity was strongly excited, and being induced by their representations of the almost certainty of succeeding in the present favourable weather, we finally determined, after much deliberation, to make the attempt. We therefore engaged Marie Coutet, an experienced guide, who had been three times on the summit, as leader, and eight other guides to accompany us. They refused to undertake the journey with a smaller party on account of the number

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Michel Tairraz, and Pierre-Marie Frasserand. The original document was in the possession of the late M. J. P. Cachat in 1908. It has been printed several times. (See 'A.J.' vol. xxi. pp. 408-412, note by Mr. C. E. Mathews; 'Ann. du C.A.F.' 1902, pp. 552-557; the 'Revue Savoisienne' vol. xlviii. pp. 293-297; and the interesting documents published in the 'Revue Alpine' 1896, pp. 112-117, by Mdle. Marie Paillon.)]

\* [According to the Balmat document mentioned above, this ascent was made on July 25, 1811.]

of articles which it was necessary to take with us, as a ladder, cords, provisions, charcoal to melt the snow for drinking, and a number of other things, which were indispensable, and which formed a sufficient quantity to load each of the nine with a considerable burthen. One day was occupied in making preparations on which our comfort and our ultimate success depended. These were passed in review in the evening, and having found that nothing material was omitted, an early hour the next day was appointed for our departure.

Accordingly, on Sunday, July 11, we left the village of Chamouny, at 5 o'clock, full of anxiety ourselves, and accompanied by the good wishes of the honest inhabitants for our success. The necessity of taking advantage of the fine weather opposed our delaying another day. Our guides, who, in common with all the inhabitants of the mountainous parts of Savoy, are very attentive to the duties of their religion, were unwilling to set out on a church day, without having previously attended service. They had, therefore, induced the curé to celebrate mass at 3 o'clock, and, notwithstanding the fatigue they expected during the day, the early hour had not prevented them from attending it.

We descended the valley by the side of the Arva, about a league, till we approached the glacier of Bossons, and then turning suddenly to the left into the woods, we began immediately a very steep ascent, parallel to and about half a mile from the edge of the glacier. After about 3 hours' toilsome mounting, we came to the last house on our road. It was the highest dwelling in the neighbourhood, and was one of those cottages called '*chalets*,' which are inhabited only during three of the summer months, when the peasants drive their cattle from the plains below to the then richer verdure of the mountains. We found there the old man and his two daughters; his wife, as is the custom, was left behind to take care of the house in the valley. After refreshing ourselves with a delicious draught of fresh milk, and receiving the wishes of these good people for a *bon voyage*, we bade adieu to all traces of man, and continued to mount. Another hour's toil brought us above the region of wood, after which the few stunted vegetables we met with gradually diminished in size, and when we arrived, at 10 o'clock, at the upper edge of the glacier of Bossons, only a few mosses and the most hardy alpine plants were to be found.

We had been compelled a little before, by the precipices of the Aiguille du Midi, which presented themselves like a wall

before us, to change our direction, and instead of proceeding parallel to the glacier, to strike off suddenly towards it. We had now a close view of some of the obstacles which bar the approach to Mont Blanc; the glacier of Bossons, on which we were about to enter, seemed to me absolutely impassable. The only relief to the white snow and ice before us was an occasional rock, thrusting its sharp point above their surface, and too steep to permit the snow to lodge on it. One of these rocks, or rather a chain of them, called the 'Grand Mulet,' which we had destined for our resting-place for the night, was before us, but far above our heads at the distance of 4 or 5 miles; the glacier, however, still intervened, and appeared to defy all attempts to approach it.

The glacier of Bossons, like all the glaciers of the Alps, is an immense mass of ice filling a valley which stretches down the mountain side, and is formed by the accumulated snow and ice, which are constantly, in the summer months, falling from above. While the glaciers are thus continually increasing on the surface, the internal heat of the earth is slowly melting them below. Hence, when they are large, there generally proceeds from under them a considerable stream: such are the sources of the Rhine and of the Rhone. Their surface often resembles that of a violent, agitated sea, suddenly congealed. They are frequently of several leagues in breadth, and from 100 to 600 ft. in depth. The snow which falls on them, to the depth of several feet every winter, is softened by the sun's rays in summer; and, freezing again at the return of cold weather, but in a more solid state, forms a successive layer every year. This stratum may be easily measured (as each of them is distinctly separated from its neighbour by a dark line) at the section made by those cracks which traverse every glacier in all directions. These cracks or crevices are generally thought to be caused by the irregular sinking of part of the mass, whose support below has been gradually melted away. They are formed suddenly, and frequently with a noise that may be heard at the distance of several miles, and with a shock that makes the neighbouring country tremble: this effect takes place principally in summer. These rents are from a few inches to 20, 30, or even 50 or 60 ft. in breadth, and generally of immense depth: probably extending to the bottom of the glacier. They present the greatest danger and difficulty to the passenger. They are often concealed by a layer of snow, which gives no indication on its surface of its want of solidity; and it often happens that the chamois hunter,

notwithstanding all his caution, suddenly sinks through this treacherous veil into the chasm beneath.

We remained a couple of hours at our resting-place to take some refreshment, and to regain strength for our next difficult task. Jacques Balmat accompanied us thus far to point out the best means of attaining that spot on which he was the first to set foot ; but the infirmities of age prevented him from accompanying us farther. Our feet seemed to linger, and to leave with reluctance the last ground they were to touch until the period of our return.

We, however, entered on the glacier with confidence in the skill and prudence of our guides ; several of whom, being hunters and accustomed to chase the chamois over such places, were acquainted with all the precautions that it was necessary to take for our safety. To avoid the danger of falling into the crevices, especially those masked by the snow, we connected ourselves, three persons together, at the distance of 10 or 12 ft. apart, by a cord round the body : so that in case of one of the three falling into a chasm, the other two could at least support him, until assistance could be procured from the rest of the party.

Each person was provided with a pole 6 ft. long, and pointed at the bottom with iron, which we found to be a necessary article. Where the crevices were not more than 2 or 3 ft. broad, we leaped over them with the assistance of our staff ; others we passed on natural bridges of snow that threatened every moment to sink with us into the abyss ; and over others we made a bridge of the ladder, which was extremely slight as otherwise it would have been impossible for a man to carry it up the steeps we had ascended. Without its assistance, we could not have passed the glacier. Over this slender support we crawled with caution, suspended over a chasm, into which we could see to an immense depth ; but of which in no instance could we see the bottom. We were sometimes forced to pass on a narrow ridge of treacherous ice, not more than a foot in breadth, with one of these terrific chasms on either side. The firm step with which we saw our guides pass these difficulties, inspired us with confidence ; but I cannot even now think of some of the situations we were placed in without a feeling of dread ; and especially when in bed and in the silence of the night, they present themselves to my imagination, I involuntarily shrink with horror at the idea, and am astonished in recollecting what little sensation I felt at the moment.

We threw down into some of the narrow cracks pieces of ice and fragments of rock, and heard, for a considerable time, the more and more distant sound, as they bounded from side to side. In no instance could we perceive the stone strike the bottom; but the sound, instead of ceasing suddenly as would then have been the case, grew fainter and fainter, until it was too feeble to be heard. What then must be the immense depth of these openings, when in these silent regions, the noise of a large stone striking the bottom is too distant to be heard at the orifice!

The number of openings we met with, which were broader than the length of our ladder, and which, of course, we had no means of crossing, rendered our path extremely circuitous. We were often enabled, by the ladder's assistance, to scale high and perpendicular banks of snow. It sometimes proved too short to reach to the top; but where the steep was not absolutely perpendicular, we contrived in several instances to remedy this inconvenience. One of the guides, standing on the top of the ladder, enabled the rest, who clambered up by his assistance and over his shoulders, to reach the summit; when there, we easily drew up him and the ladder with cords.

We were occasionally compelled to retrace our steps, and we were frequently so involved in the intricacies of the glacier that we had to remain, without proceeding, a considerable time, until the guides, who were dispersed in every direction on the discovery, could find a practical path to extricate us.

In addition to these difficulties, I had not been long on the glacier before I perceived that my faithless boot had given way; which, as everything depended upon the state of our feet, was a serious misfortune. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and I contrived to bind it with cords in such a manner that it served me tolerably well the rest of the journey.

In consequence of all these obstacles, we only arrived at 5 o'clock at the 'Grand Mulet,' not more than 4 or 5 miles distant in a straight line from the point where we entered on the glacier; but, from the circuitous route we had taken, we could not have walked less, in this distance, than 14 or 15 miles. We were now 11,000 ft. above the level of the sea, and 8,000 ft. above the village of Chamouny. A niche on the steep side, and near the top of the rock, about 150 ft. from its base, and to which we had much difficulty in climbing, was selected for our lodging place; indeed, it was the only part of the rock that afforded anything like a level



place. We were fortunate in finding the day had been so warm that there was water in some of the crevices of the ice, which circumstance enabled us to economize our charcoal. The sun shone very bright on our side of the rock ; but, as soon as it sunk below the horizon, the eternal frost around us regained its influence, and the air became very cold. We had, however, time to dry our boots and pantaloons, and I found a pair of large woollen stockings that I had with me, an invaluable article. Our guides stretched the ladder from one point of the rock to another, and, throwing over it a couple of sheets they had brought for the purpose, formed a kind of tent, just large enough for Dr. Van Rensselaer and myself to creep in : a single blanket upon the rock was our bed. The guides were so loaded with indispensable articles that we had not been able to bring a blanket, or even an extra coat to cover us.

After a cold and uncomfortable supper, we crept into our den soon after the genial sun had left us, and endeavoured, by every means our ingenuity could suggest, but ineffectually, to keep ourselves warm. We suffered much from the cold, but principally toward morning, as the thermometer was several degrees below freezing. The night seemed to last at least twenty hours ; at one time I thought the day must certainly be not distant, and was surprised, at looking at my watch by the light of the moon, to find it only 11 o'clock. Tired of inaction, and shivering with the cold, I crawled out, about midnight, to endeavour to warm myself by the exercise of clambering on the rock. The view around was sublime, and rendered me for a time insensible to all feelings of personal suffering.

The sky was very clear, but perfectly black ; the moon and stars, whose rays were not obscured by passing through the lower dense region of the atmosphere, as when seen from the surface of the earth, shone with a brilliancy, tenfold of what I had ever observed from below ; and the comet with its bright tail formed, in the north-west, a beautiful object. Nothing was to be seen around the rock on which we were placed but white snow and some heavy clouds, that, floating below us, shut out the valley from our view. The guides appeared to be all asleep, and the only interruption to the silence of death was the occasional avalanche, rolling with the sound of distant thunder from the highest part of the surrounding glaciers, and heightening the feelings of awful sublimity, which our situation was so calculated to inspire.

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As our lodging was extremely uncomfortable in every respect, we were under no temptation of lying till a late hour in the morning. On the contrary, we hailed with joy the first appearance of the dawn, which enabled us to substitute the warmth of marching for the cold inactivity from which we had suffered all night. We set out at 3 o'clock, leaving most of our provisions and other articles on the rock. Four hours of laborious, but not dangerous, walking brought us to a large plain, called the 'Grand Plateau,' which is nearly surrounded on the one hand by a spur of Mont Blanc and the Aiguille du Midi; on the other, by the Montagne de la Côte; while Mont Blanc presents itself directly in front. These mountains form a steep amphitheatre around this plain. Here we stopped an hour to breakfast, and to recruit strength for the last and most difficult part of the ascent. We were now more than 12,000 ft. above the level of the sea, and only 3,000 ft. lower than the summit, which was in full view before us. But I looked around, in vain, for any part of its steep sides that seemed to offer a possibility of being scaled; and when the guides pointed out the route we were to take among and over precipices, and huge broken masses of snow, and up almost perpendicular steeps I involuntarily shrunk at the prospect, and could not forbear casting my eye wistfully at our road back. But it would not have done to be deterred at this time by a few difficulties; and a moment's reflection on the skill and experience of our guides renewed our confidence, and we began cheerfully to mount the first steep before us. We here began to feel more seriously an effect that is always experienced at considerable heights, and which had not much incommoded us before. It was impossible for the strongest of us to take more than twenty or thirty steps without stopping to take breath; and this effect gradually increased as we continued to ascend; insomuch, that when near the summit, even the stoutest of our guides, who could run for leagues over the lower mountains without panting, could not take more than twelve, or at most fifteen steps, without being ready to sink for want of breath. If we attempted to exceed this number by even three or four steps, a horrible oppression, as of approaching death, seized us; our limbs became excessively painful, and threatened to sink under us. It is very possible, that Walter Scott's hero

Up Ben Lomond's side could press,  
And not a sob his toil confess;

but I am very certain he could not perform the same feat on Mont Blanc. It is remarkable, that a few seconds' rest was sufficient to restore both our strength and breath. One of our guides, a robust man; who had been once on the summit, was so much incommoded that we were compelled to leave him behind to await our return. I experienced some inconvenience from a slight degree of nausea and headache, of which most of those who have made this journey have complained. When ascending *Ætna*, two months before, I had been seriously affected both by a difficulty of breathing, and by a violent thumping of the heart and arteries, which was loud enough to be easily heard by my companions, and which the slightest exertion was sufficient to excite. In the present instance I dreaded these effects, and had already begun to feel them in an uncomfortable degree, but was almost entirely relieved by drinking plentifully of vinegar and water, with which our guides, to whom experience had taught its utility, had taken care to be well provided. This drink was extremely agreeable to us; wine, on the contrary, disgusted us. All the water we had, we had brought from the rock at which we slept, where we had carefully collected it from the cracks of the ice: for we were now in the region of eternal ice, where rain never falls, and where the utmost power of the midsummer sun can only soften, in a slight degree, the surface of the snow.

The acclivity we were now ascending was steeper than any we had before encountered, so much so that we could only accomplish it by a zigzag path, advancing not more than a few feet every 20 or 30 yards we walked. To have an idea of our situation, you must imagine us marching in single file on the steep mountain side, placing with the greatest care our feet in the steps, which the hardness of the snow rendered it necessary for our leader to cut with an axe, supporting ourselves with our poles against the upper side of the slope, and having on the other side the same rapid slope terminating below in a precipice several hundred feet in height, over which we saw rapidly hurried all the small pieces of ice that we loosened with our feet. Our situation was similar to that of a person scaling the steep and iced roof of a lofty house, and constantly liable, by an incautious step, to be suddenly precipitated over the eaves. After we had been proceeding in this manner for some time, I looked down on the plateau beneath, for the guide we had left, and when at last I discerned him, like a speck on the snow, my head began to grow dizzy

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at the idea of the distance below me, and I was forced to keep my head averted from this side, to recover from this disagreeable feeling.

Our guides had attached themselves and us with cords, each three persons together, as when passing the glacier. They were provided with large iron cramps fastened to their feet, which prevented them from slipping. Dr. Van Rensselaer and myself had found this contrivance impede too much our walking, and after a short trial had given it up, so that we had to rely on the firmness of foot of those guides to whom we were tied to preserve us in case of our falling. I am not entirely convinced that if one of us had had the misfortune to fall, and were slipping down the declivity, he would not have drawn his two companions, in spite of these precautions, over the precipice. To add to our difficulties, the sun was excessively bright, and almost blinded us, notwithstanding the gauze veils with which we were all provided.

Fortunately, we met with but few crevices; however, on passing one of these that was hid by the snow, I suddenly sunk, but my body being thrown forward by this motion, my breast opposed a larger surface to the snow which thus supported me, and I was easily extricated by a guide. On looking back through the hole I had broken, I could perceive the black cavity beneath.

At one period, our path necessarily led us close under a wall of snow, more than 150 ft. high, from the top of which projected several large masses of snow that appeared to require only a touch to bring them down on our heads. Our captain pointed out our danger, and enjoined us to pass as quickly as possible, and to observe the strictest silence. When we looked up at these

toppling crags of ice,  
The avalanches, whom a breath draws down  
In mountainous o'erwhelming,

we felt no disposition to disobey his directions, but passed on with hurried step, and in the stillness of death. The inhabitants of those parts of the Alps, exposed to these avalanches, assert that the concussion of the air, produced by the voice, is often sufficient to loosen and bring down their immense masses. Hence, the muleteer is often seen to take the bells from his animals when he passes through a valley subject to this danger. A few years since some young men, relying on the solidity of the ice, and wishing to try the echo, were so im-

prudent as to discharge a pistol in a large cave which is at the lower edge of the Glacier des Bois, near Chamouny. The shock brought down the roof, which crushed them on the spot.<sup>10</sup>

At 11 o'clock we had passed most of the difficulties, and all the dangers, of our ascent, and reached a granite rock, which appears                   , or nipple,<sup>11</sup> which forms the summit of Mont Blanc. This rock is only 1,000 ft. lower than the summit. Here we enjoyed a full view of the valley and village of Chamouny, which had hitherto been masked by the 'Aiguille du Midi'; and when we recollected the promises of our friends there to watch our progress with their glasses, and were convinced that they were at that moment observing us, we felt relieved from the sensation which we had previously experienced of being shut out from the world. In fact, we learned afterwards that they had seen us distinctly, counted our number, and observed that one of the party was missing: this was the guide we had left at the 'plateau.'

Our final object was now close at hand. We turned, with renewed ardour, to accomplish it; continuing our zigzag path, till, after much suffering from fatigue, cold, and shortness of breath, we stood, at half an hour after noon, on the highest point of Europe!

Our first impulse, on arriving, was to enjoy the pleasure of throwing our eyes around, without encountering any obstacle. The world was at our feet. The sensations I felt were rather those of awe, than of sublimity. It seemed that I no longer trod on this globe, but that I was removed to some higher planet, from which I could look down on a scene which I had lately inhabited, and where I had left behind me the passions, the sufferings, and the vices of men. The houses of Chamouny appeared like dwellings of ants, and the river which flows through the valley seemed not sufficient to drown one of these pigmy animals. These emotions made me for

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<sup>10</sup> [This accident is mentioned in the 1810 edition of Ebel's 'Manuel du Voyageur en Suisse' (vol. ii. p. 371): 'Le 8 août 1797 un M. Maitz de Genève, accompagné de son fils et de son cousin, alla visiter la voûte du Glacier des Bois. Cette voûte s'étant écroulée, ces trois infortunés furent entraînés par les ondes furieuses de l'Arveiron. Un coup de pistolet, imprudemment lâché dans la voûte, avoit déterminé la chute des glaces.' According to a note in 'La Montagne' (1919, p. 276) by our honorary member M. E. A. Martel, the celebrated grotto disappeared in 1873.]

<sup>11</sup> [Several words have apparently been omitted here in the original text.]

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some time insensible to the cold, but the piercing wind, which here had free scope, soon put an end to my waking dream, and, bringing me back to the reality of life, enabled me to fix my attention on the objects around.

Notwithstanding the pleasure inspired by the view, it was certainly more terrific than beautiful. The distant objects appeared as if covered by a veil. To the north-west was the chain of Jura, with a mist hanging on its whole extent, which prevented the eye from penetrating into France in that direction. On the north was the Lake of Geneva, of a black colour, and surrounded by mountains, which we had thought high, while we were on its banks, but which now appeared insignificant, and the lake itself seemed scarcely capacious enough to bathe in. To the east were the only mountains that appeared of a considerable size ; among which, the most conspicuous were the Jungfrau and Schreckhorn in Grindelwalden, and Monte Rosa, on the borders of Piedmont, which raises its hoary and magnificent head to within a few hundred feet of the level of Mont Blanc. The grand St. Bernard was at our feet to the south-east, scarcely appearing to rise to more than a mole-hill's height above the adjoining valleys. The obstacles which Bonaparte had to encounter in leading his army over this mountain, even in winter, appeared so diminished in our eyes, that this vaunted undertaking lost, at the moment, in our estimation, much of its heroism and grandeur.

The view below and immediately around, presented a shapeless collection of craggy points, among which the 'Needles' were easily distinguished. We could hardly trust our senses when we saw, beneath our feet, those rocks, which, from below, appear higher than Mont Blanc itself, and which seem to penetrate into the region of the stars, and to threaten to 'disturb the moon in passing by.' Our view may be compared with that from the top of an elevated steeple over an extensive city, of which, except in the immediate neighbourhood, the roofs only of the various buildings which compose it are to be seen. The only green that we could perceive was the narrow valley of Chamouny, and the two valleys by the side of St. Bernard. The portion of the earth that was not covered with snow appeared of a gloomy and dark grey colour. The world presented an image of chaos, and offered but little to tempt our return to it.

The top of Mont Blanc is a ridge of perhaps 150 ft. in length, and 6 or 8 ft. in breadth. It is entirely composed of snow,

which is probably of immense depth, and is constantly accumulating. We could see no traces of the obelisk, 12 ft. in height, which had been set up about ten years before. One of our guides was of the number of those who placed it, and designated to us its position. The highest rock which appears above the snow, is a small one of granite, 600 ft. below the summit. We remained but a few minutes immediately on the top, as the wind blew hard and piercingly cold. Descending a few feet on the south side, we were partially sheltered from the wind, and here the sun shone with an excessive brightness, heating every part of the body exposed to his rays; but the least breath of wind, which reached us at intervals, was sufficient to make us shiver with cold. Fahrenheit's thermometer in the sun was  $2^{\circ}$  below freezing, and  $5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  in the shade. It must be considered, however, that we suffered a much greater degree of cold than the thermometer indicated, from the rapid evaporation from the surface of our bodies of the insensible transpiration occasioned by the dryness and great rarity of the surrounding air. This cause, familiar to physiologists, affected our sensations, and could not influence the thermometer. Most of our guides stretched themselves on the snow in the sun, and yielded to the strong inclination to sleep, which we all felt. Only one or two of them ate; the others, on the contrary, evinced an aversion to all kinds of food. We did not suffer the great thirst which Saussure and his party experienced. This we prevented by drinking vinegar and water, which was very grateful to us, instead of pure water. Our pulses were increased in frequency and fulness, and we had all the symptoms of fever. I occupied myself, notwithstanding the indisposition to action which I felt, in making a few observations, and in stopping and sealing very carefully a bottle which I had filled with the air of the summit, intended for examination on my return.

The colour of the sky had gradually assumed a deeper tint of blue as we ascended: its present colour was dark indigo, approaching nearly to black. There was something awful in this appearance, so different from any we had ever witnessed. There was nothing to which we could compare it, except to the sun shining at midnight. During some of the first attempts that were made to ascend Mont Blanc, this appearance produced so strong an effect on the minds of the guides, who imagined that Heaven was frowning on their undertaking, that they refused to proceed. The portion of atmosphere above us was entirely free from the vapours

which the lower strata always contain, and was truly the 'pure empyreal,' seldom seen by mortal eyes. We had all our life beheld the sun through a mist, but we now saw him, face to face, in all his splendour. The guides asserted that the stars can be seen, in full day, by a person placed in the shade. It being near noon, and the sun almost over our heads, we could not find shadow to enable us to make the experiment.

The air on the top of Mont Blanc is of but little more than half the density of that at the surface of the ocean. According to the observations of Saussure, the height of the barometer on the summit was  $16\frac{1}{2}$  in., while that of a corresponding one at Geneva was 28 in. In consequence of this rarity of the air, a pistol, heavily charged, which we fired several times, made scarcely more noise than the crack of a postillion's whip.

We remained an hour and a quarter on the summit, part of which time was spent in useless regrets at not having waited to provide ourselves with instruments, as we were now so admirably situated to make with them a series of interesting experiments. Those which had suggested themselves were principally concerning the absorption and radiation of caloric, and on the degree of cold produced by the evaporation of ether and other liquids. We found the descent more easy and much less fatiguing, though perhaps more dangerous than the ascent, on account of the greater risk of slipping. We passed under the place where the avalanche threatened us with even more caution and more rapidity than before, as we found that a small piece had actually fallen, and covered our path since we had passed by. We arrived in an hour at the 'Grand Plateau,' where we stopped to refresh ourselves, and gratify our returning appetites. We found the guide whom we had left quite relieved. Here the sun, reflected from the walls of snow which surrounded us on three sides, poured down upon us with the most burning heat that I ever experienced from its rays, while our feet, cold from being immersed in the snow, prevented perspiration, and thus increased its power. Wherever its rays could penetrate, as between the cap and neckcloth, or even to the hands, it resembled the application of a heated iron. We were compelled, in addition to the assistance of our veils, to keep our eyes half closed, and even then the light was too powerful for them.

We, however, continued with ease and cheerfulness the descent, until an unexpected difficulty occurred. Where in the morning we had cut our footsteps with an axe, we now found the snow so much softened by the sun, that we sunk in.



it, every third or fourth step, to the middle of the body. My friend and myself were more subject to this inconvenience than the guides, on account of the soles of our boots presenting a lesser surface to the snow than those of their large shoes. After plunging on in this manner for some time, I began to despair of reaching our rock, which was yet 4 or 5 miles distant; but there was no alternative but to proceed. We therefore kept on, though with excessive fatigue. We frequently fell forward, and one limb, being tightly engaged in the snow, was violently twisted, and constantly liable to be sprained, which in our situation would have been a serious misfortune. The crevices, too, were, from their edges having become softened, more dangerous than before. Perseverance and caution, however, triumphed over all these difficulties, and we reached the 'Grand Mulet' half an hour after five, our boots, stockings, and pantaloons completely soaked. These were immediately stretched on the rock to dry, which the heat of the sun soon effected. I had the disappointment to find, on examining my pockets, that the bottle which I had so carefully filled with the air of the summit had been broken in one of my frequent falls, and, of course, my hopes of making with it some interesting experiments were now destroyed. The thermometer was also broken.

Notwithstanding the Herculean labour of the day, and the fatigue we experienced at the time, we had not been long on our rock before we felt strong and invigorated, as if just risen from a comfortable night's repose. This effect of the mountain air has often been remarked. We had even sufficient strength and ample time to enable us to continue our descent with ease to Chamouny; but in the present softened state of the snow it would have been madness to attempt to cross the glacier, which we had found difficult and dangerous the preceding day, even before the sun's rays had affected it. In fact, while two of the guides were looking down on our path over the glacier, they saw a bridge of snow which we all crossed the day before, suddenly sink into the chasm beneath.

Imprisoned thus by the glacier, which was now all that intervened betwixt us and terra firma, we quietly resolved to remain where we were, and made the same arrangements for passing the night as we had done the evening before. We were, however, at present better off: I mentioned that we had been so fortunate as to find a sufficient supply of water in the neighbourhood of our rock, in consequence of which most of the charcoal we had brought to melt the snow

remained. With this we made a small fire at our feet, and, by blowing almost constantly, kept it up during the night. It has been often observed that, as we ascend in the atmosphere, the difficulty of maintaining combustion is proportionately increased. The cold was, notwithstanding our fire, so great that whenever I fell asleep, I was awakened in a few minutes to shiver and chatter my teeth. Our guides slept in the open air, huddled as close together as possible.

July 18.—The dawning of the day was truly welcome, as it promised a near termination to our toils and suffering, while the gratification of having accomplished a difficult and interesting object remained as a recompense. We left our hard bed without reluctance, and were impatient at the slowness with which the guides made their preparations in packing up their numerous articles. We began to descend as the sun illumined the white top of Mont Blanc, but long before his beams penetrated below. Above our heads the sky was perfectly clear, while the valleys beneath, and all except a few of the highest surrounding mountains, were concealed by a sea of clouds. The appearance of the clouds when seen from above is singular; they resemble immense floating masses of light carded cotton. We retraced our path of the first day, and took the same precaution as then of tying ourselves together. When the sun's rays began to shine on the snow around us, I found that my eyes were so much inflamed, I could scarcely bear them sufficiently open to see the path; notwithstanding the gauze veil I had constantly used, my skin was in a terrible condition: the outer skin had fallen, rendering my skin and lips one continued sore. Dr. Van Rensselaer's eyes were in a worse condition than mine, and his face nearly as bad.

At one part of the glacier where the snow had been so hard at our passing that our feet left no impression, we lost our path, which was a misfortune, as we had chosen a much better path in ascending than we could have done in descending. We, however, fell in with the track of two chamois, which our guides followed with confidence, relying on their instinct, which they attribute to these animals, of finding a practicable path over the most difficult glaciers. When we had at last passed the glacier, our feet seemed to rejoice at once more touching firm ground; and we felt as if returning to the world from a distant voyage. The rest of our task offered no difficulty, being a constant descent down the rocky mountainside, except what was occasioned by our almost

total blindness, and the pain we suffered in our eyes. It was, however, fatiguing, as the descent from a mountain is generally more so than the ascent to it. We stopped at the same chalet, where two days before we had bid adieu to the world ; and were regaled by the old man and his daughters with another delicious draught of milk and cream. We reached the village soon after 10 o'clock in the morning, having been absent 53 hours, during 45 of which we were on the ice. We were received with many congratulations by the honest villagers, who had taken considerable interest in our success.

As soon as my companions and myself reached our inn, we buried ourselves in our chamber to enjoy the luxury of a bed, and of darkness which was necessary for our eyes. It was not until the sun had set, and the twilight was not too strong for them, that we ventured out to regale ourselves with a comfortable meal. Two English visitors, who had watched with a glass our progress on the top of Mont Blanc, had expressed a determination to follow our example ; but our account of the difficulties we met with, and still more the view of the condition we were in, soon induced them to abandon the design. We walked out at the approach of night under the 'Needles,' and as we saw these rocks, on whose sides

. . . the clouds  
Pause to repose themselves in passing by,

and on whose tops the stars seemed to rest, we could scarcely realise the idea that they were the same we had seen only thirty hours before far below our feet.

The next day after our return to Chamouny, our eyes had become so much stronger that we were enabled, without much inconvenience, to proceed to Geneva, where we have since remained to recover from our sufferings. Though now more than a week has elapsed, my face is yet much inflamed ; but my eyes have regained their usual strength. Dr. Van Rensselaer has suffered in the same manner, but on the whole rather less than myself. Wherever the sun's rays could penetrate, even behind the ears to the level of the neckcloth, the skin has fallen off, and I have exchanged the tawny hue of an Italian and Sicilian sun, for the fair complexion of a German or Englishman. We have purchased, perhaps, too dearly the indulgence of our curiosity ; but, at present, when the difficulties are passed, and the gratification remains, I cannot regret our hardships, especially if I succeed in making you partake of the one without suffering from the other.

THE TRAVERSE OF THE AIGUILLE BLANCHE DE PEUTERET AND  
OF MONT BLANC DE COURMAYEUR—A MEMORIAL TO A  
GREAT GUIDE.

BY J. P. FARRAR.

(Read before the Alpine Club, June 5, 1917.)

I AM here to-night purely as a stop-gap. I am another of those old goats of Mr. Freshfield's which has to be served up as a reflection of an Alpine holiday. The first of the old goats furnished much good food for reflection, while, as for the arch-goat, he got served up under a wrong name, for he turned out to be the best *pré salé*. Before you get through me, you will find I am only tough cold storage.

I was at first much perturbed to know what to talk to you about. I was inclined to describe episodes of expeditions of my declining years, when I had been beguiled into pursuing the fascinating pastime of climbing without guides. My duties in such a party are very varied. I am required, first, to draw up a programme, and to forget whether I have ever ascended any of the included peaks. I did this once, and we failed to hit the Cima di Jazzi by a full mile. Then, at a modest dinner, I am requested to unfold the plan. This I proceed to do, starting gently and warily as becomes a mountaineer; but, as I watch the ardour of anticipation quicken the austere ascetic countenance of one of my friends and smooth out the lines of deep thought—caused, I trust, not *entirely* by meditation on the shortcomings of his climbing companion—so my pulse quickens and I measure out the mountains, not by the metre but by the mile. I feel like a Chancellor expounding a Budget, with the difference that the more I demand of my audience, the better they like it.

Still, there are drawbacks to this eminently enjoyable method of making ascents; for sometimes, during the journey, when I am most busy in doing nothing, I am required to get my glass and adjourn to a convenient hillock, where, prone on my stomach, I can examine the scheduled route for the next day. Meantime I observe my taskmaster retire to an adjacent point of vantage and there, with pursed lips and knitted brow,

proceed to study a small, well-worn, almost greasy book, which at first I took for a book of devotions, or possibly Dr. Watts' Hymns. Still, I reflected that my friend's sins, so far as I knew, were not such as to cause him great tribulation, and by a sort of inductive reasoning, remembering that all *modern* verses, even by a Past President of this Club, to be super-excellent *must* be more or less mystic, I finally concluded that my friend must be immersed in such, and it turned out that the little book was by a man called Browning.

Meantime, my other companion (I am not naming anybody), as I was sure to see out of the other corner of my eye, had felt compelled to undertake the mountaineering education of some fair countrywoman of ours who might be in the neighbourhood. I might mention that even Browning has been known to fail to completely engross my other aforesaid companion on such an occasion, and with such opportunities. Even I myself have at times felt constrained, as the senior and staid member of the party, to abandon my topographical researches so as to make sure that the precepts and instructions were on the sound lines laid down by the Alpine Club for such occasions. If these rules should need bringing up to date, to suit advanced conditions, I feel sure we can find eminent authorities among our members.

You will see, gentlemen, what insidious cares beset the path, not alone on a mountain, of the senior member—one might say the Nestor—of an unguided party.

Now in matters Alpine I confess to a shameless inconstancy. I am equally content and delighted in the Maritimes, among the great peaks of the Central Alps, or in the uttermost parts of Tirol. In past years, when I travelled by myself with a guide companion, at the last moment, wooed by some memory of brilliant half-forgotten scenes, we would, as the lawyers say, completely change our venue.

Still, in my heart, the great chain of Mont Blanc has never failed to assert its pride of place.

Most of us have, in our Alpine career, some outstanding year, an *annus mirabilis* in which everything worked in together—mine was, I think, 1893. I had been absent from the Alps—not, of course, from mountains—for eight seasons, and, with time on my hands, I was able, served by great guides, to make up the leeway in two—one of them was '93.

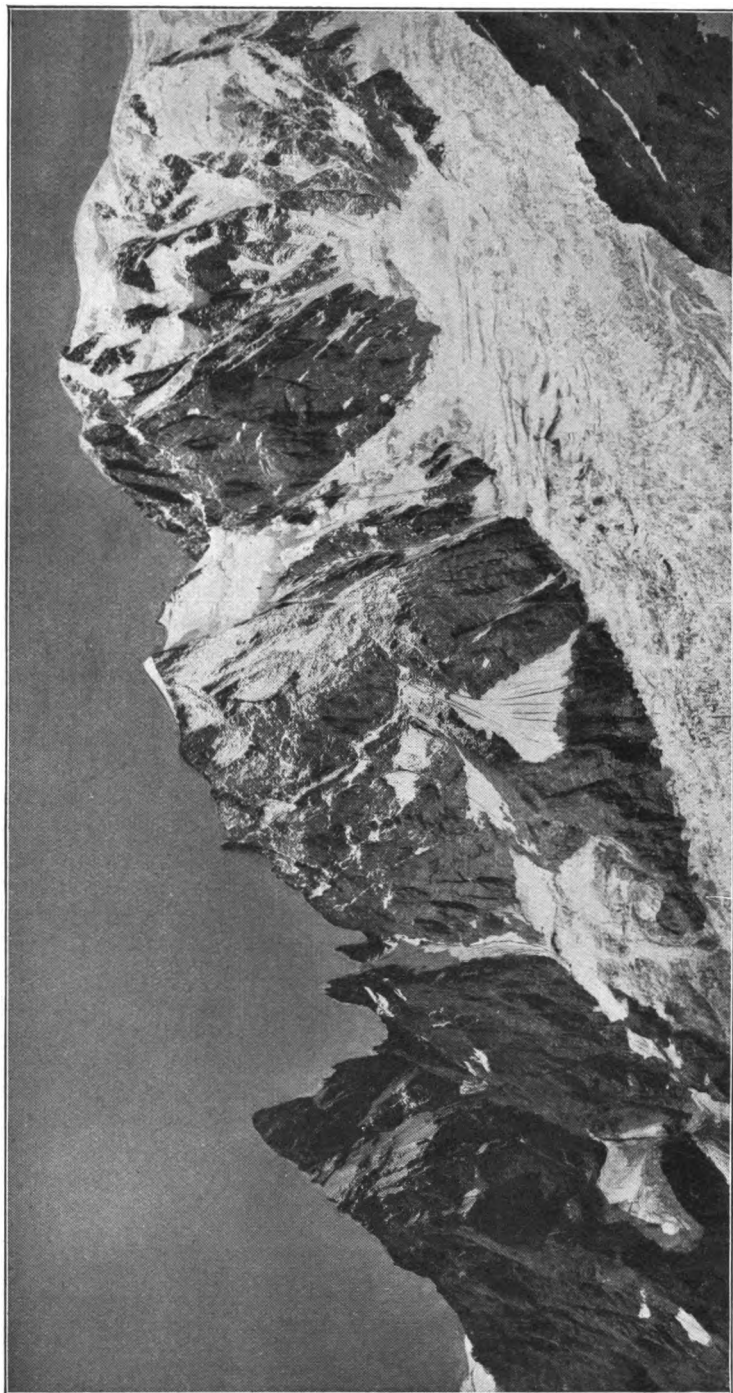
I have ventured to call the traverse of the Aig. Blanche de Peuteret and of the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur a great traverse, for it is classed by a mountaineer of European repute, who

has done them both, as second only to the traverse of the two peaks of Ushba.

Moreover, it took us twenty hours of *ascent*, so that it has impressed itself on my memory. Up to date, it has been done four times. The two expeditions which succeeded ours have not included any Englishmen, and have been, moreover, made without guides.

For years a great glamour attached to the Aig. Blanche. It was the last unconquered 4,000 m., and when, in 1882, Professor Francis Maitland Balfour, led by the daring Johann Petrus, neighbour and comrade of Alexander Burgener, came to an untimely end in attacking it, it seemed to put on a mantle of inaccessibility reminiscent of the old Matterhorn days. Whether they actually gained the summit is not known, but an almost equal sensation was aroused when, three years later, the great mountain fell to the attack of Sir Seymour King and his Saas guides, *led*, I think I may say in this case, by Emile Rey, one of the most enterprising guides of his period. I say *led*, because it is certain that the sagacious Emile had had the mountain for some time in his pocket, and was only awaiting an opportunity to put therein, before delivering the goods, something else of greater exchange value. Rey had, namely, already, in 1880, been on the Col de Peuteret, lying between the Aig. Blanche and the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, with Herr Gruber, whence they had followed the great arête to the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, and from any point on this arête he completely overlooked the arête which leads from the Col de Peuteret to the Aig. Blanche, and must have been quite certain of its accessibility, as, in effect, it offers no difficulty whatever.

My attraction to the mountain was quite fortuitous. On July 23, '93, Daniel Maquignaz, Christian Klucker and I, then in our best years, lean and fit as dog-wolves, bivouacked for the Brenva route on the well-known rocky island in the Brenva glacier. After arranging, as I well remember, a quite excellent sleeping-place—at the foot of a rocky wall facing south—I became greatly interested in the mighty E. face of the Aig. Blanche directly opposite to us. What I saw is here shown. Another picture by Mr. Hastings, taken before their memorable traverse of Mont Blanc, hangs on my wall. It is obvious that a fairly safe route up it can be traced. On questioning Daniel it appeared that he had once bivouacked at its foot—I think he said with Evan Mackenzie—intending to try it, but bad weather intervened.



*Photo. A. Holmes*

**THE PEUTERET RANGE AND MONT BLANC**

**FROM AIG DE LA BRENVA**





We then and there decided to attempt it, as soon as our plans would let us get back to Courmayeur and the moon and weather would serve.

We did the Brenva all right next day, but bad weather drove us down to Chamonix. We had ordered two porter-loads of provisions to the Sella hut, including a whole leg of mutton and several bottles of Bertolini's good wine. My friend Broome's was the next party to visit that hut and he asserts that when they opened the door they were fairly laid out and rendered incapable by the aroma of the leg of mutton; but I am inclined to believe that their incapacity may have been partly due to other causes; for when, *eleven* years later, we at last reached that hut, fully expecting to find our wine *old in bottle* and perfectly *frappé*, we found the cupboard bare. Daniel and I, on that occasion, were snowed in for three days in the great blizzard of August 21-23, and finally, after dividing our last scrap of provisions—one solitary egg—had to force a descent in a metre of snow. 'Ces coquins de voleurs qui ont bu notre vin!' was his main refrain.

After the Brenva, once at Chamonix the Aiguilles kept us busy for several days and Klucker had to join Güssfeldt, when one day, to our great astonishment, Kesteven and Marshall brought the news that they had met Güssfeldt with Rey and Klucker on Mont Blanc, having done the E. face of the Aig. Blanche and followed the arête to the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur and Mont Blanc. They described the whole party as tired out after three days' work. Perhaps I had a slight qualm, but, after all, if the mountain belonged to anyone, *that man was Rey*. Moreover, I have never been of those epicures whose mountain tastes are so jaded by experience—or possibly so undeveloped, owing to ignorance and inexperience—that nothing but the caviare of new ascents could find favour. Every ascent that I have not done is a *first ascent to me*; and even when I have followed the delightful practice of repeating an ascent, I have never failed to find some fresh delight—some new perfection. So we hardened our hearts, Daniel simply remarking: 'Nous le ferons assez.' Still, as Sir Martin Conway told us the other day in a remarkable paper, there is a vast difference between a matter-of-fact belief that *of course* you can reach a certain spot and the uncertainty when it never has been reached.

Güssfeldt's ascent had made a tremendous impression in Courmayeur. Not a guide then there would look at it—you might as well ask him to give you his best cow. Even porters

to the bivouac were hard to be got, and demanded 50 francs per man and not less than three men. Daniel naturally be-thought him of his relatives in Val Tournanche, the cradle of many hard mountaineers, and of three men whose names will go down for all time as great masters of the craft. We accordingly telegraphed to Jean Baptiste, Daniel's cousin, then about thirty, the elder son of the famous Jean Joseph Maquignaz. Baptiste had traversed Monte Rosa in winter, and was reputed one of the strongest and hardest guides in the Val Tournanche. Meantime we heard that, on his return from the expedition, our former companion Klucker had said that had he been with us instead of with Dr. Güssfeldt we should have got to the top the same day.

Baptiste arrived, prepared to go anywhere or do anything with Daniel as leader, and on August 26 our imposing caravan of six men left the Royal at 9.30 A.M. and reached at 6.20 the rocks at the foot of the Aig. Blanche, after some difficulty in crossing the Brenva Glacier. We made a bivouac on a ridge running due E., each one finding his own gîte. I remember mine was a kind of tomb. Next morning the three of us were away at 4.40 before daylight. We had to cross the ice couloir which serves as a shoot from the S. arête of the Aig. Blanche, and so ascended our ridge of rocks with the couloir on our right hand, until we reached at 5 its narrowest point. Daniel thereupon proceeded to cut across it, while we kept a very wary look-out for anything falling. Now and again small bits of ice came whizzing down, but at 5.15 we were all safely across, Daniel having cut twenty-six steps in hard ice. We then took to the rocks on the other side—these form a broad broken-up arête, or rather convex face, nowhere offering any great difficulty, the rocks being much broken but good, and the holds firm. We traversed continually in a northerly direction and had to cross two stone couloirs which might be dangerous later in the day. My note is 'exposed.' I take it that it is these which held up for some time Blodig and Compton, when they made in 1905 the first *descent* of this face. We then turned W. up a tolerably defined rock-ridge and sat down to breakfast 6.35 to 7. Weather perfect—no wind. The end of this rock-ridge came at 9.30. We had had no difficulty—just ordinary care required—and we had now to traverse away to our left across an ice-slope. Here, for the first time, we saw signs of our predecessors in the shape of half-melted steps in ice. I think Dr. Güssfeldt says his people cut seventy, but we saw at most twenty.

Daniel cut out the half-melted steps, and twenty-one minutes later, at 9.51, we were on the summit of the Aig. Blanche, an exquisitely delicate little point, the apex of four snow arêtes—4,109 m. is the height—nearly 13,500 ft.

We had only taken 5 hrs. 11 mins. including twenty-five minutes' halt, and were overjoyed at our easy and quick triumph. Still, the arête leading to the Mont Blanc looked terribly long, while on the arête of our mountain leading to the Col de Peuteret there were two great ugly gendarmes which looked awkward.

There was little room and no rocks on the summit, so after five minutes' halt we started down the steep up-and-down snow and ice arête towards the Col de Peuteret until we reached an outcrop of rock where we made a long halt to eat, 10.20 to 11.5.

The first gendarme we turned on its right; the other we climbed right over, and leaving the arête by a short gully on the Fresnay side we traversed back to the arête over some steep ice, and were in the Col de Peuteret at 1.15. We reckoned the Mont Blanc *down and out*! We were at a height of nearly 4,000 m. and so had still rather over 2,500 ft. to the top of the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, but a *long, long*, arête.

This Col has, properly speaking, been reached but twice, and then from its W. or Fresnay side by Rey and Gruber, in their great expedition of 1880, and by Rey and Sir Seymour King's party by a somewhat different route in 1885. The Col has never been crossed; its E. side, unless the séracs alter, is out of the question.

Mont Blanc de Courmayeur from this side was first tried in 1874 by T. S. Kennedy, T. Middlemore, with Joh. Fischer and Jaun, and a little later in the same season by J. A. Garth Marshall, with Fischer and Ulrich Almer. Descending the Brouillard glacier at midnight, Marshall and his guides fell into a crevasse, Ulrich, whom nothing apparently can kill, alone escaping. They were probably aiming at the Col Emile Rey, then, of course, unknown and unnamed.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Eccles makes mention of the gigantic slabs of this S. face.

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<sup>1</sup> In January 1920, Dr. Claude Wilson saw Ulrich at Grindelwald. Ulrich states that his party in 1874 followed the arête between the Fresnay and Brouillard Glaciers to the point where the two glaciers join and then a little up the rocks where they had to bear somewhat to the left. But the rocks were *schneebedeckt*, and they soon had to turn back.

Still, in my opinion, to the E. or right of these the face is much broken and there must be a route.<sup>2</sup>

We spent only five minutes on the Col. The arête leading to Mont Blanc is at first a snow arête, and as (for the first time that day) Daniel started *kicking* steps, my constant optimism fairly overflowed. 'En trois heures nous sommes au sommet!' Daniel, turning round with a dubious smile, answered: 'Espérons!'

The snow arête only lasted twenty minutes, and the axe was at work before it came to an end. At 1.50 we took to the rocks on the right and gave ourselves ten minutes. Below us, deep down on our left, was the great couloir, not looking very inviting, up which Michel Payot had led Mr. Eccles in 1877. Still, nothing fell down it all day. We continued on good rocks below the arête to the left, then got almost on to the arête, but descended a short traverse to the left of a big tower and came, all of a sudden, on Güssfeldt's second bivouac under a big rock on the Fresnay side, 3.33—a fresh-labelled empty bottle of Graves was the only sign of human passage. There was only room for one man to lie down—the others must have sat or stood. Klucker told me afterwards that they had felt the cold badly, especially down the front of the thighs. I have myself remarked the same feeling, and I see it mentioned in 'Camp Craft' lately reviewed in 'A.J.'

A deserted bivouac place, on a route which has been but rarely done, always seems to me to have something pathetically human about it, and I have gazed with a never-failing interest on similar places in many parts of the Alps, relics of a period of mountaineering now fast fading. However, we were by now in full cry, and traversing 10 yards along a wall, we turned sharp to the right up a steep chimney—the only real foot-and-hand climbing worth talking about the whole day.

Traversing away to the right, we gained the arête at 4.25, and we saw now what we were in for. A sharp, steep, ice arête, with jutting-out rocks, corniced in places, led upwards, seemingly endless. But there was more than this. As far as the Col de Peuteret the weather was perfect—warm—no wind, but now we could see that over the top of Mont Blanc was blowing a northerly gale. We were still too low down to feel its effect, but higher up we could see the bits of snow and ice blown off the arête, and we had a shrewd suspicion that a bit later our turn might come.

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<sup>2</sup> This route was done 1919 by Mr. Oliver and Capt. Courtauld, as related elsewhere.

Daniel, always at the post of honour, bent his back to the axe, and literally for hours we progressed at a rate that you understand as well as I do is, in these conditions, *painfully* slow. I had relieved him of his sack already much lower down, and Baptiste carried mine and his own. The ice was not that hard blue ice you often read of, but seldom meet, but a white weathered kind, which required quite careful treatment with the axe on a narrow arête. You needed only to give one glance at the sharks' teeth with which the very steep slope on the left was sown to keep your attention at full pressure. A slip would have sent our whole party bumping down the slope, and the sharks' teeth would have literally *shredded* us to bits—like passing through the teeth of a sausage machine. I see the place now, almost with a shudder!

I do not remember that we stopped to eat—we carried raisins and sugar in our pockets—but once, for a moment, Daniel half reeled with the continuous work—he had been leading for *fourteen hours*. We restored our leader with some wine and food, standing in our steps. About 6 an occasional downblast of wind gave us a warning of what was in store. It was still light, and once more Daniel set to work with the axe. But each step brought us more into the wind, and soon, every other minute, we heard the howl as of a thousand wolves, and, quickly jamming in our axes, bent our backs in mortal fear of being blown clean away. I exchanged, now and again, a few words with the usually loquacious Baptiste, but only in the intervals could one make oneself heard. We hardly noticed the daylight vanish, for it was full moon or nearly.

At about 10 the arête opened out to form a sort of rocky headland. I was rather keen to stop there, although the shelter was of the scantiest, as the quickly recurring blasts of the hurricane were becoming trying in the extreme. However, we faced it once more, always step-cutting, until, about 11 p.m., we could take to some rocks on the left and climbed a broad rock couloir, which gave the leader some relief. Baptiste had for some little time been complaining that he could not feel his feet. There was nothing to be done but to stick steadily to it.

The rock couloir ended in a snow arête, when the wind seemed to drop. Thirty yards higher Daniel halted, and looking up in the half light I saw he was under a great cornice. It was just midnight by my watch. We brought up Baptiste, so that we should not be knocked over, and Daniel proceeded to flog a passage through the overhanging lip.

I closed up to him, and he half scrambled and was half pushed through the hole. I followed, helped by the frozen rope. Almost before I could look round, and see that we were on the top itself, the frightful N. gale almost beat us to the ground. Baptiste followed and for a moment we clung to our rammed axes, gasping for breath. Daniel, as ever, the quickest to pull himself together, beckoned (the wind drowned even a shout) to get under the lee—one could not call it a shelter—of a little outcrop of rocks a few yards further on. Round one of these Daniel flung the rope, and we huddled down on the snow; for facing that gale—even across the broad, almost level, arête leading to Mont Blanc—would have meant an accident. He and I put our feet in our sacks, regardless of the contents. We made signs to Baptiste to do the same, but he would sit on his sack and kick his heels against the snow. There was no arguing with him—one could not make oneself heard shouting. We could not eat, for one dare not take a glove off for a moment.

Those of you who know the desperate misery of such a night need no remarks of mine. As to you others, I only hope you may not have any such experience.

The only part which seemed to retain any pretence of heat was the stomach, over which one fondly clasped the arms.

All night long the hurricane continued, clouds scudding across the moon. We now and again exchanged a sign.

There we crouched for five mortal hours, and even when broad daylight came, one felt little inclined to stir and face the full force of the icy blast. However, at 5.5, Daniel and I scrambled to our feet. Baptiste asserted that his feet were frozen and that he could not move. With a little encouragement he managed to stand up, and we fairly towed him across the summit of Mont Blanc, passed at 5.35, whence we ran down in 13 minutes to our quarters of a fortnight earlier, the hut on the Rochers Rouges. There was at that time, of course, no observatory on the summit, nor a Vallot hut.

No one was there in such weather. Daniel and I were none the worse—of course our boots were hard frozen, and as I took mine off, icicles which had formed round the toes *inside* the boots fell out. With Baptiste it was quite different. We undid his boots and pulled off his stockings. His feet, half-way up to the instep, were the colour of a paraffin candle. Both the men had seen frost-bite before—to me it was new—and they seemed to think, with rubbing, he would soon be all right again. It appeared he was wearing *new boots*.

I will not tire you with details. The porters engaged in carrying up the building materials for the observatory arrived on the second day, and we got our man to Chamonix on a sledge. I put him up at Couttet's, with an attendant to see to him. Joseph Couttet was very obliging, and made me eventually a very moderate charge. Others did not. He eventually lost all his toes, as dry gangrene set in, but the next autumn we were after chamois in the Val Tournanche, and he was equal to the best of us, and never seems now to feel the difference.

One of the pictures shows the hero of this expedition, as of many another, in a state of content—the day's work done.

It is probably the greatest single-handed bit of leading in the Alps. This paper is a memorial to my great leader.

While we were detained at the Rochers Rouges, who should arrive but C. E. Matthews, on his twelfth ascent of Mont Blanc, accompanied by Melchior and Auguste Cupelin.

It may interest you to know what the first ascent cost. Dr. Güssfeldt gave Rey 600 frs., Klucker 400 frs., Ollier 250 frs., and his porters 150 frs., so that, with provisions, his expenses must have been at least £60. I should be sorry to say what mine were, as Baptiste was laid up nine months.

There is nothing of great interest about the ascent, nor any difficult rock climbing, but I think it will always be very long. I dare say the wind cost us two or three hours. There is no reason why it should not be repeated, but the members of the party had *better* be very fit, and the weather *ought* to be without reproach.

Daniel and I were on Mont Blanc again in 1898 and in 1904, but it was not till 1907 that I saw the scene of our adventure again. That summer, 'long man' Rolleston, Cajrati, and I, at the end of a good season, slept at the Midi Hut. In the morning one of them got up and announced that the weather was doubtful. Accordingly, as I never mind waiting two or three days in a hut, I did not budge. Whether my conscience smote me or not I forget, but a little later I *did* get up and had a look out. The weather was a bit overcast, but, happening to cast my eyes down to the right, I beheld on the glacier below *lines of lights*, and it dawned on me that these were the 'voltigeurs' from Chamonix en route for Mont Blanc. There was not much peace in the hut, or any more rest for the weary then. My companions assert that we went to the top of Mont Blanc under five hours, taking an hour from the Col de la Brenva. I kept no times, but when there were any remarks I dropped a couple of raisins in the track as a peace-offering.

Now, Cajrati is a great man with the ladies, and at Courmayeur we had been—I will not say *envious*—witnesses of several interesting leave-takings with his fair countrywomen. On the top of Mont Blanc he professed to have had enough, but we were not to be gainsaid, and tying him up between us we rattled across to the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, so that he could behold the village and salute his interesting companions as he had promised to do.

Tightly held by the cautious 'long man'—a pre-eminently sound mountaineer—I flogged a notch in the cornice, and lying down gazed with much interest on our route of 14 years before—it dipped too steeply to show me much, and I failed to identify the outcrop of rocks where we spent that fateful night. I can see it clearly in my mind's eye.

Returning to the summit of Mont Blanc, I led off, in pursuance of a long-cherished plan, down the Ancien Passage. We wore crampons and were on the Grand Plateau in 50 minutes, having had hardly a step to cut. It is very slightly exposed for two or three minutes at its foot, but there was a north wind blowing, and in such circumstances it is still a better route than the Bosses or the Mur de la Côte.

That was my last ascent of Mont Blanc. I still cherish a hope it may not remain so, as my Sella Hut route still defies me.

Daniel, as you know, lies at peace under the Church of Val Tournanche. About his name twine memories of some of the completely happy days of my mountaineering life. A Great Comrade never dies—he only goes before.

Surely the great charm of the mountains is the exquisite memories they leave us. We may grow old, but we can draw on great days of the past—can recall many a good comrade, cheerful in hardship, staunch in danger.

I sometimes think that it is not the actual expeditions, but rather the refined memories of them, purged of fatigue and hardship, that we really love—that it is *when the stress of the doing has merged in the peace of the done, that we know the supreme delight!*



## COMPENSATIONS.

By GEOFFREY E. HOWARD.

(Read before the Alpine Club, February 8, 1920.)

THE only reasonable excuse to be offered to this Club for a paper not illustrated by a lantern is that it shall be short. A lantern covers a multitude of sins, the darkness hides the reader's blushes, while the feeblest orator can atone for the poverty of his ideas by judiciously borrowing slides from the best quarters. But apart from the fact that my remarks will be agreeably brief, I really cannot tell you what possessed me to offer this paper. Perhaps it was largely because I have come to the conclusion that there must be other people who suffer and enjoy much as I do, but they have a natural shrinking from declaring themselves: and such persons, if really right-minded, ought to shrink. Personally I am not right-minded, and have come to the conclusion that I will state my case.

I find it assumed by dwellers in flat-land that, because I perpetually wander among the mountains, I must therefore be a man of iron nerve. If by chance it appears that I am a member of this Club, this fallacy promptly blossoms into fantastic flowers of conviction which I find make an exceedingly embarrassing garland. When I try to explain this, I am asked: 'Then why in the world do you climb?'

Well, I don't; and that is a fact. I know that this may seem rather an awful confession to make, because we all like to think that we have nerves of iron even if we have not. But there it is: I have little or no head; I die several deaths on a mountain; I am often half strangled by the beating of my own heart. Every time I am in a moderately unpleasant place, I swear that I will go to Brighton for my holidays and play chess. And next time I go back to the mountains!

For long I conceived myself to be a kind of Alpine pariah, and have shrunk from confessing my shortcomings. This I have always supposed to be due to exquisite modesty on my part, but now I am not sure that it was anything but a nasty form of self-conceit, because I suppose that we all do suffer in a greater or lesser degree.

George Borrow tells of one who spent years of agony because he thought he had committed an unforgiveable sin ; and yet, on the mere suggestion that probably many others had done precisely the same thing, completely regained his mental equanimity.

As I take it, some fortunate individuals are endowed by nature with a kind of physiological gyroscope which enables them not only to stand upon steep ice-slopes and look down sheer precipices with entire placidity, but even to find exhilarating enjoyment in the process. Alas ! in constructing me, nature omitted this ingenious piece of mechanism, and if for many years this omission has made me feel that I moved among you under false pretences, to-night I will make a clean breast of it.

A. reads a paper describing the most glorious day he ever had—a horrible experience on black ice at 48°—eight hours of it—grand work. B. tells of the perfect delight of ten hours up a face with hardly a ledge upon it for a brief rest and the snatching of a hasty meal. I have sometimes gone home and kicked myself. ‘They *enjoy* it,’ I have murmured, ‘and you, you miserable creature, would have been in an agony !’ At first, with the enthusiasm of youth, I tried to imitate them ; later I sank to mere envy, but now content myself with a frank and profound admiration.

Confession is good for the soul. I am no climber. Nay, often I am a trembling alarmist : Dante-esque dreams disturb my slumbers in the hut. Once fairly launched upon a course of self-castigation, I will even admit that some of the happiest moments of my life have been when, halfway up a rather stiff climb, all have agreed that a return was inevitable. And the curious thing is that at that moment I become as one of you. No matter how difficult the descent, all sense of nervousness departs, and I come down with ease and assurance—my face, of course, set in the sad, stern lines of a bitterly disappointed man.

Before leaving this melancholy subject and passing on to the brighter aspects of my character, I would say that climbing nerves were recently given a mathematical definition by a Flying Cadet which I now often apply with entertaining results. I was taking him up his first mountain, and at one point he diverged for a few yards to climb a very steep snow-slope to examine the foot of a chimney. On turning to descend, he visibly hesitated and shouted in the vernacular, ‘This rather puts the wind up me.’ On rejoining me he added

thoughtfully, 'That slope was just beyond my angle of wind.'

It is instructive to get a party to compare notes on various slopes of various consistencies. I suppose that as a matter of fact all but an exceptionally gifted few have their own angle of wind. Climb diagonally up a gradually steepening snow-slope: at one moment you are as unconcerned as though you were walking along Savile Row; at the next something happens inside you. I do not mean that you necessarily become nervous like me, but you become alert, you must plant your feet with attention—oh, it takes a hundred shapes!—but, at any rate, your mental attitude changes. The pitch of the slope has suddenly reached your angle of wind. Mine is a lamentably low one, but if for that reason I have, in a sense, to garb myself in a white sheet, then do I boldly demand that it shall have a fair border of flowers, that it shall smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia, as befits the spouse of a pleasure of the soul which no one shall deny me. For if my knees are weak, my back is strong. If chimneys are anathema, arêtes and ice-slopes a nightmare, the mountains still hold a glory of which the most terrified may drink to his full.

No, I do not refer to those who sit upon verandahs, or pause during their tennis to gaze aloft and twitter about grandeur and God's noble works. I mean the person who, after much labour and sweat of mental misery, realises that he simply cannot climb in the accepted sense of the word, but yet adores the high places with such a sweet passion that he must for ever be leaving the plains and struggling upwards to get among rocks and snow and good bare nakedness. He has no set reason for this which he can absolutely explain, any more than that man can quite explain just why he adores that one particular woman—whom you and I, by the way, may possibly consider a singularly dismal female.

The first climb I ever did was the Tschingelhorn. By the time I reached the top I knew two things—that nothing in the world can ever compare with the joy of being on a mountain, and that nothing short of a miracle would ever make me a climber. Since then, for some twenty-four years, I have never missed a chance of going up mountains—not climbing—bundling up somehow; often suffering acutely, more especially at first, when I tried to . . . let me see . . . I fancy 'swank' is the only apposite word. Now, in the mellow forties, I have ceased to pretend, especially to myself: and every man is at once his own sternest critic and his most gullible dupe.

And yet, as the years go on, I realise more and more how much I owe to my absurd inability to enjoy a ledge or even to stand with serenity in a correct attitude in ice-steps.

I find on mature consideration that I have been compensated so richly that I have not only ceased to repine but am positively grateful for my feeble equipment. For why? Finding myself a joyful slave to the mountains, a very mountain-maniac, unable to pass by even one alluring rock, I was forced willy-nilly to wander in search of those forms of the drug which allayed my fever without reacting upon my nervous system, and have been thereby driven into strange and exquisite places, many of which offer few attractions from a climbing point of view pure and simple.

There is a valley in the Pyrenees, or rather a cañon, with a thousand feet of forest sloping steeply up on each side and above—four thousand feet of sheer rock. A foaming torrent runs through it, and in a meadow on its bank stands a small white hut. Here I have spent halcyon days scrambling to the top of the Mt. Perdu or to the Brèche de Roland, wandering among the grim rock plateaux, and again just lazing in the silent valley. So sylvan and remote was that happy spot that once we rashly decided to be truly Adamic, and for a whole day doffed all clothing and returned to nature. But nature would have none of us and sharply reminded us of our obligations to civilisation by peeling us from head to heel—a most agonizing process. But even so, we could lie under a bower of beech leaves and eat wild raspberries and fresh trout, and blink lazily, and make plans, and wait in a rapture of expectation for the sinking sun to turn our great walls into sheets and towers of flame.

From the Val d'Arrassas to Andorra seems a natural if a somewhat lengthy step, for once you have penetrated to the hidden, almost secret valleys of the Pyrenees you are insatiable. There is something peculiarly remote and strange in them. In Andorra, indeed, the wild, independent inhabitants add to the feeling, and the wearisome journey through gorges and by dizzy paths brings you insensibly back into the world of Washington Irving and his tales of raids and night-rides. Indeed, in some ways the deep-set ravines here seem a truer stage-setting for him than his own mountains in the south. The Sierra Nevada in their savage nakedness, with their vast expanses of terrible scree, unrelieved by any vegetation, seem more fitting to be the haunts of great scaly prehistoric monsters than of knights of chivalry.

To stand on the summit of, say, the Veleta and watch the dawn lighting up that terrific desolation is almost horrible. Even in the mountains of Sinai the utter barrenness is relieved and made exquisite by the marvellous play of ever-changing colour ; but no mood of Nature ever seems to lighten the awful depression of the Sierra in summer when the snow is gone. To spend a week there with the brazen sun by day and the biting cold by night, an occasional shepherd or wandering thief your only links with the world, is an experience which would touch the sublime did not the incidental small discomforts perpetually bring one back to the ridiculous.

I cannot leave Spain without making my bow to the most astonishing mountain I know, namely Montserrat. You will shudder when I remark that a funicular railway takes you a good part of the way up. Worse still—when I visited it I did so in company with some thousands, for it was a great feast-day, and the convent which nestles in a vast cleft was teeming with pilgrims coming to venerate one of the innumerable black images ascribed to the chisel of that most indefatigable sculptor, St. Luke. Indeed, if one accepts as authentic all the carving in Spain attributed to him, one can only marvel that he found enough spare time to write a Gospel, to say nothing of the Acts. But further on one could wander in solitude among the fantastic towers and pyramids ; here a dark track, between unimaginable masses of sinister crags, ends suddenly at the tiny rock-hewn cell of a mediæval hermit ; here you scramble through stunted junipers and up over what seem to be the dismembered limbs of some infinitely huge stone monster. Awesome cracks twist downwards and end in black abysses two thousand feet below. It is as though some stupendous and half-witted giant before the beginning of Time had dumped upon the flat plain a mass of plastic material and started to model it into sugar-loaves and great smooth shapes ; then suddenly he would smash or crush it in meaningless fury, and tear it with huge hands. At last it is as if with one final burst of maniacal rage he plunged his club into the middle, leaving a vast hollow surrounded by nightmare pinnacles and meaningless cones. As one looks out from the highest point it is like looking over the sea, for Montserrat springs quite suddenly out of the great plain, and a stormy sunset from there is an inefaceable memory.

One is almost surfeited with accounts of how the terror inspired by mountains caused our forebears to suppose them to be the haunts of dragons and devils. The Greeks knew

otherwise, and just once I had a vision—a vision of Pan himself. Oddly enough, this was in a most unclassical spot, five thousand miles from Greece. Tucked away in the Selkirks in the Canadian Rockies, a Sabbath day's journey from the railway, I found myself one perfect evening in a little glen—a cup high-pitched among the big mountains. Stately trees rose to mysterious heights, and the soft green ground was knee-deep in moss and a myriad flowers. A score of bubbling brooks murmured deliciously, and, sitting down, I was soon lost in a half-dream. Imperceptibly I began to hear music; then, clear as a bell, a voice called and another answered with low laughter. Bright eyes twinkled at me through the flowers, and as I sat motionless, tiny forms slipped to and fro, half seen and yet wholly elusive. I ceased to be sensible and gave myself up to the magic of the moment. Pan and his nymphs were there, and for a flash of time I was with them in their age-long gambols.

That night I felt very foolish, but next day, wandering there with an old trapper who had a shack among the trees, I shamefacedly confessed. He did not laugh: men who live in the mountains only laugh at those who regard them as nothing but tiresome obstacles.

He told me that when he first went there with one companion they constantly had the same idea. Twenty times a day each would think the other was calling and, as he expressed it, they would 'see things.' It may be that common-sense explanations of caves and running streams beneath the ground, and of thousands of bright-eyed marmots which swarmed there, will satisfy the scientific, but for my part I am content with the magic illusion of that moment; and the man who always calls upon his heritage of higher education to shatter his illusions can never hope to drink to the full of the treasured nectar which the mountains distil in secret for those who woo them with the ecstasy of lovers.

The Canadian Rockies bring me a thousand thoughts and a thousand compensations. The sense of self-dependence there can hardly be found in European mountains. True, you must have ponies, a packer, a teepee, and some store of tinned food. But otherwise a sharp axe, a .22 rifle, some crude fishing apparatus and plenty of matches are the keys to Paradise. You wander through primeval forests, camping where you will among the larches. Cut your quota of young trees for tent-poles, fire, and bedding, shoot a few 'fool-hens' for the pot or catch half a dozen fish, and you are primed for the next day's advance into the unknown.

I know of no joy quite comparable to that of pioneering. I do not mean the joy of the man who first conquers a peak essayed in vain a score of times by those less skilful or less fortunate than himself—that must indeed be to drink with the gods. I mean rather the strange and stimulating range of thought called forth by the knowledge that your foot is the very first to tread any portion of the crust of Mother Earth. Sometimes on some otherwise insignificant excrescence I have lain and dreamed. The mind ranges back over the history of mankind, over the vast epics of teeming Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and mediæval Europe. Through it all, this spot of earth was waiting, waiting for *you*. When Babylon fell and Rome burned, this stony virgin waited, cold and serene, until æons later a frightened cockney claimed her all indifferent. Sometimes my mind has jumped impishly from point to point in history, following the same train of thought. When Moses lay in the bulrushes, when Penelope spun, when Alfred burnt the cakes—yes, even when Hervey meditated among the tombs, this stony or snowy lump was still here, still waiting.

None of you who have felt the spell of mountains will condemn me for this, which to me is a perennial source of wonder and delight. It seems to emphasise the aloofness of high places—their purity from the horrid vulgarities of man, and the crying need that men should tread them with awe and wonder and love in their hearts, and not with the idea that they are merely a means to an end.

One groans to note a tendency in some quarters to make of them what our good friends call a ‘stunt.’ I remember once dining at a London restaurant after a journey to the Rockies and discussing my experiences with a friend, when a person at the same table, with a rich red beard and a burning eye, eagerly joined in the talk. He was ‘reel struck on those Rockies.’ Was there any money in them? We vaguely opined that they must contain undeveloped mineral resources. ‘No, no,’ he cried; ‘I mean, would they be the goods for cinema work?’

Alas! this ‘stunt’ idea is not confined to photography. Who does not shudder at a great deal of the modern writing about mountains and climbing so obviously penned with the single motive of being a good seller? It is difficult to say what impression it makes upon the reading public, but to me these wonderful effusions seem to be neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring. The climber who reads them to learn the route is bewildered by the endless asides, the flowers of

eloquence and quotations from the poets ; the pure neophyte is at a loss to gather whether the expedition described is unspeakably dangerous or a careless jaunt ; while the film of ghastly facetiousness spread over the whole narrative reduces the humorist to tears.

For long I hesitated between Norway and Scotland as a happy hunting-ground, and while I suppose the former must bear the palm, it often strikes me as extraordinary that many mountain-lovers are so indifferent to those of our own land. No—I was wrong about Norway ; nothing in the world can surpass Skye. But I will not presume to trespass on ground so richly covered in a literary sense by the infinitely eloquent pen of our President. No one has so successfully crystallised into words as has Professor Collie the glorious sensations conjured up by the Coolins. Perhaps few have been wetter or colder or more frightened there than I have, but you cannot beat them. Go to them, and you will never rest until you have been again and again. It is partly, perhaps, their unexpectedness, partly the exquisite mingling of mountain and sea—I do not know ; I only know that they are absolutely glorious.

But I will not attempt any further catalogue of the confused ideas which the mountains pour into my irregular and disorderly mind. The odd fancy which drove me year after year in early spring alone through the stony wilderness of the Larig Ghru in the Cairn Gorms is just one more example of that pleasant form of lunacy which those who have never had the spell of the hills upon them cannot understand.

People scoff at us because we go, let us say, for two days to Westmoreland. Well, I admit that it is from their standpoint a kind of madness, but in the same breath I also admit that I am exceedingly glad to be mad. It is only the absolutely sane who have no pleasures, who lead dull, orderly lives without illusion or contrast. For my part I would rather ask, Have we, who live here in London, in the flat squalor of the unlovely houses, amid the din of shrieking traffic—have we ever really drunk deeply enough of the marvellous knowledge that, by sleeping for a single night in a train instead of in bed, we can wake among the hills and the snow and the abiding marvel of them ? Of course we all know it and do it ; but do we realise the full joy of that knowledge ? Every time it comes to me afresh with an almost stunning sense of wonder.

To find oneself quite suddenly wallowing up a snow-slope—not a very steep one, I beg of you !—after a long day in a London office, is a miracle. Somehow it seems to me far



more fantastically delightful than when you find yourself with equal suddenness by a river, in a forest, or on the sea.

And it is just this miraculous feeling of contrast which makes the high places an end in themselves, even to the vertiginous—an incomparable inspiration, the cup which holds the finest vintage which life pours for those who love the wind and the sun and the great accidents of nature.

This I can only explain by returning to the idea, which I still cherish, that among the hills, great or small, you get back nearer to the old gods, to the beginnings of things, to strength and peace and a wholesome sense of the exceeding littleness of the trifles which absorb and stultify our foolish hearts.

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#### A VETERAN OF THE CLUB.

ON July 29 last Mr. E. T. Compton, the artist so well known to members of the Club, completed his threescore years and ten, and was fêted by his neighbours at Feldaffing, in the Bavarian Highlands, where he has lived for many years.

Mr. Compton has devoted himself to Alpine painting for over half a century, sometimes spending hours at an altitude of 11,000 feet to catch a sunrise effect, and for nearly forty years has been an active member of the Club. Fifty years ago he began climbing, with his brother (also now one of the older members of the Club); and his residence in the Bavarian Highlands gave him exceptional experience of the mountains in all conditions.

During the war he was under some restrictions of a very mild kind. At one time he obtained even from Berlin a permit to paint on the Austro-Italian frontier, but the permit was turned down by the Government at Munich. Permission was given him, however, from time to time to snatch a few days among the mountains where no fighting was going on. His latest climb (which was also one of his earliest) was that of the Gross Glockner, shortly after attaining his seventieth birthday. Official deputations waited on him, and he was made an honorary member of his original section of the D.Ö.A.V. and presented with a medallion portrait of himself in relief, bearing on the reverse side a reproduction of his Royal Academy painting of the Jungfrau.

It is interesting to learn that the German and Swiss Alpine press contained friendly references to an Englishman even in 1919.

## THE ALPINE CLUB OF CANADA.

THE following letter has been received :—

DEAR MR. MUMM,—On behalf of the Alpine Club of Canada, and on my own behalf, I extend to the Alpine Club through you a most hearty invitation for a party of twenty of its members to be our guests in the coming summer at the Club House in Banff and at the Mount Assiniboine Camp.

We are at that time to officially welcome home members who were on active service, and we shall appreciate greatly the honour of having with us, upon an occasion so important, a large Alpine Club party.

The inclusive dates for holding the camp have not been fixed. It will probably open on July 24, and continue until August 7. About this, however, Mr. Wheeler will presently give you exact information.

None of us have forgotten the great pleasure that was ours in having Alpine Club members at the camp in 1909, and we shall await with lively interest the receipt of a letter from you to advise us that we may have an opportunity at our Welcome Home Camp to renew friendships formed in the Lake O'Hara days of pleasant memory, and to welcome many new friends from across the water to our mountains.

With most kind personal regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

J. D. PATTERSON,

*President, Alpine Club of Canada.*

Woodstock, Ontario,

January 23, 1920.

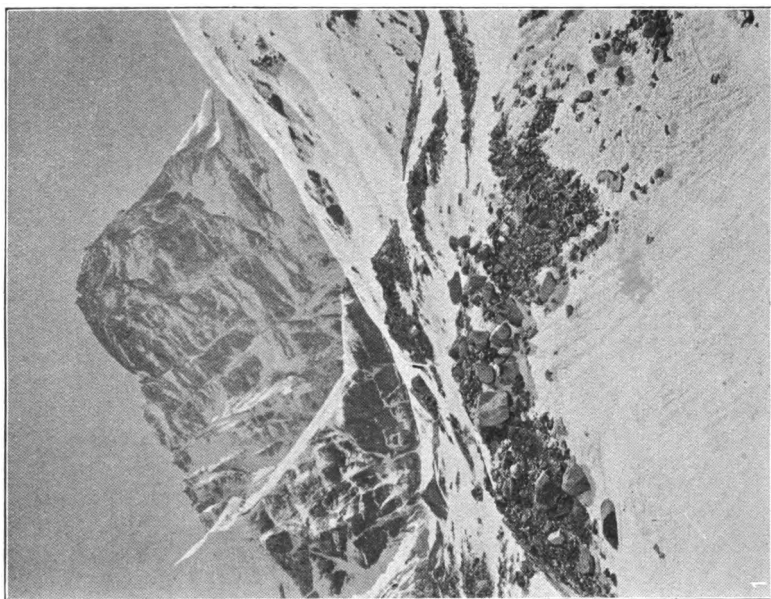
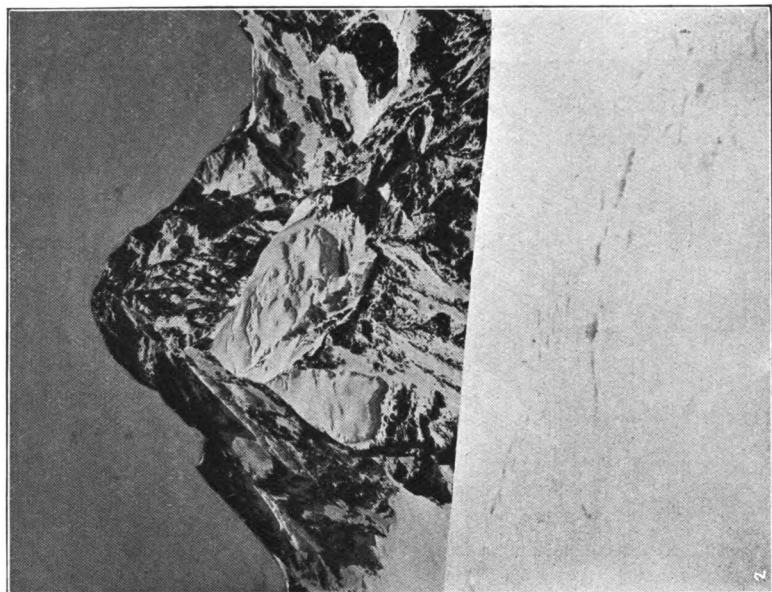
Members who might find themselves able to accept this invitation can obtain further information from Mr. A. L. Mumm, at 23 Savile Row.

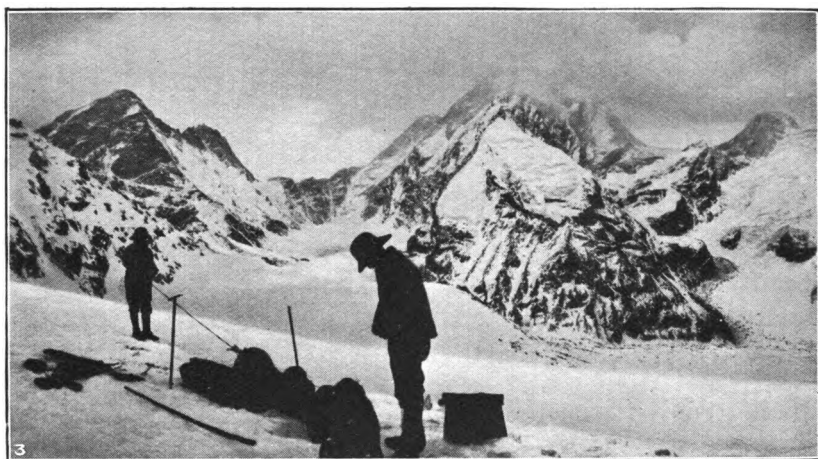
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THE SCHLAGINTWEITS AND IBI GAMIN (KAMET).

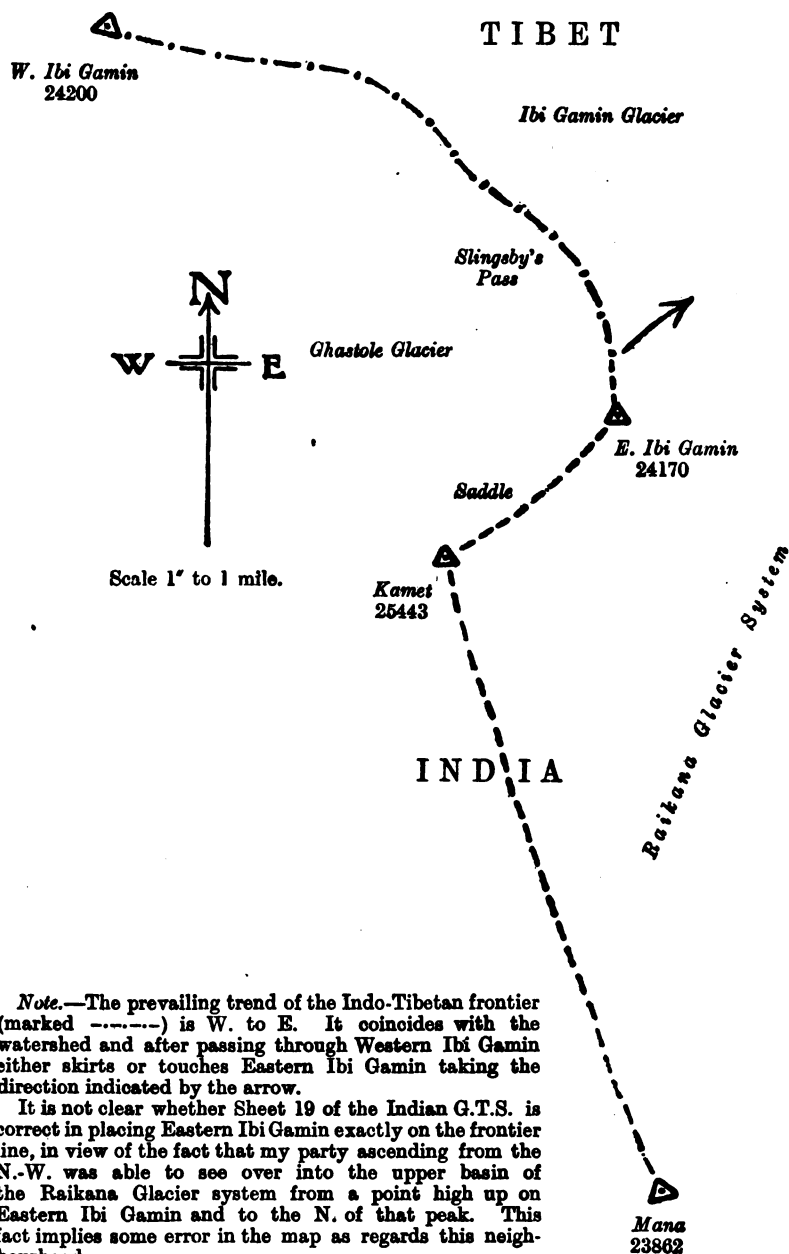
ADOLPHE and Robert Schlagintweit approached British Garhwal from Tibet in August of 1855 and reached a height of over 22,000 feet on a mountain in a group which they described under the name of Ibi Gamin.

Three weeks afterwards Adolphe Schlagintweit made an accurate panorama drawing of the group from the Boko La,





SKETCH MAP BASED ON G.T.S.



*Note.*—The prevailing trend of the Indo-Tibetan frontier (marked - - - - -) is W. to E. It coincides with the watershed and after passing through Western Ibi Gamin either skirts or touches Eastern Ibi Gamin taking the direction indicated by the arrow.

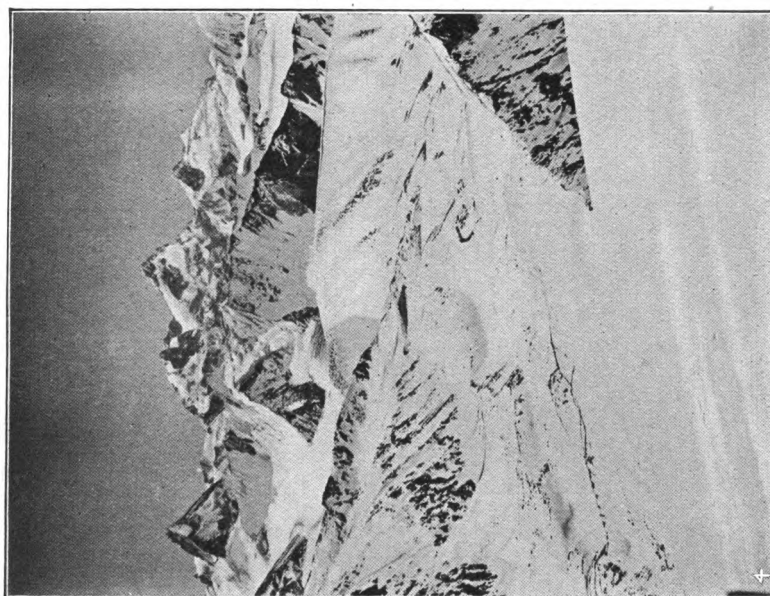
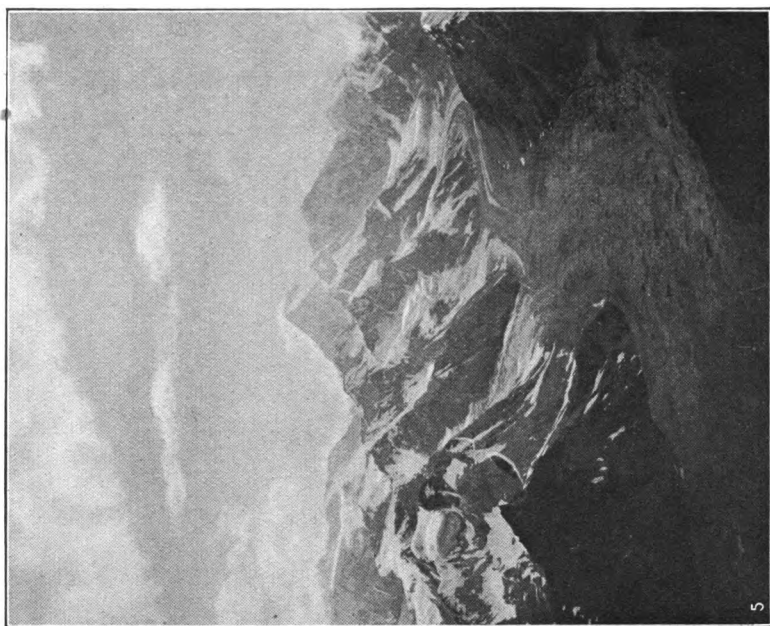
It is not clear whether Sheet 19 of the Indian G.T.S. is correct in placing Eastern Ibi Gamin exactly on the frontier line, in view of the fact that my party ascending from the N.-W. was able to see over into the upper basin of the Raikana Glacier system from a point high up on Eastern Ibi Gamin and to the N. of that peak. This fact implies some error in the map as regards this neighbourhood.

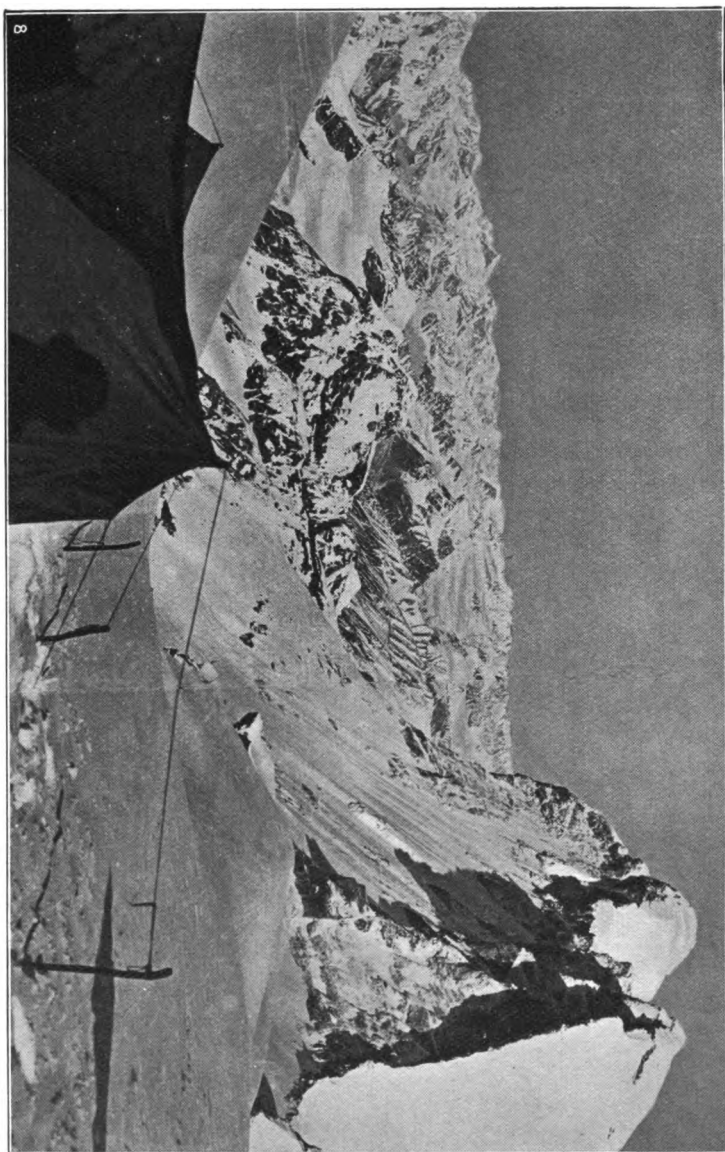
57 miles distant, in Tibet. There can be no doubt that the mountain named Central Ibi Gamin in the panorama, with an estimated height of 25,550 feet (the peak which the brothers believed they had attempted), is the Kamet of the Indian Survey, for Kamet is the only peak of over 25,000 feet with a similar situation in that neighbourhood. All three peaks in the drawing, 'Central,' 'Western,' and 'Eastern Ibi Gamin,' appear to be correctly placed, the central peak, now known as Kamet, being rightly shown as the highest. The 'Western Ibi Gamin' is Peak 48 of the Indian Survey, triangulated as 24,200 feet.

After three visits to this district I have come to the conclusion that the 'Ibi Gamin' on which the brothers made their record ascent is not Kamet ('Central Ibi Gamin'), as they believed, but the lower neighbouring peak 'Eastern Ibi Gamin,' afterwards triangulated by Strachey as 24,170 feet, and sometimes known as 'Strachey's Peak.'

The Schlagintweits state that before making their ascent from a camp on the Ibi Gamin glacier in Tibet, they saw two peaks. One of these two must have been the 'Western Ibi Gamin' (Peak 48) afterwards sketched by Adolphe in his panorama. The other they chose for their attempt, thinking that it was the higher. They evidently believed it to be the 'Central Ibi Gamin' (Kamet) of the subsequent panorama, for they ascribed to it a height of 25,550 feet. But in my opinion they were deceived, and the mountain which they attacked was 'Eastern Ibi Gamin'—that is to say, Strachey's Peak—a summit much lower than Kamet, and 30 feet lower than Peak 48. In the case of climbers coming from Tibet the error is natural. Strachey's Peak might, by concealing Kamet, be easily mistaken for it. The higher mountain, Kamet, is a mile behind Strachey's Peak, and situated to the S.W. within the frontier, entirely in India. It would be practically impossible to reach Kamet from Tibet without first achieving a prodigious feat in passing over the top of Strachey's Peak, and it is clear that the Schlagintweits did not take this course. Similarly Mr. Pocock (of the G.T.S.), who came from Mana in 1875, must have set up his record plane table station (22,040 ft.) on Eastern Ibi Gamin and not on Kamet itself.

In spite of his accurate sketch from the Boko La, Adolphe Schlagintweit seems to have had no suspicion that it was the 'Eastern Ibi Gamin' of his drawing—that is to say, Strachey's Peak (24,170 feet)—that he had attacked with his brother three weeks previously. Nor did he seem to appreciate the signi-







ficance of the fact that only two of the three Ibi Gamin which he depicts had been visible from the camp on the Ibi Gamin glacier (Peak 48 and Strachey's Peak as I believe).

In my own case, I had reconnoitred the group in 1910, but did not realise the separate identity of Strachey's mountain,<sup>1</sup> believing it to be a mere *gend'arme* till late in the summer of 1912, when I reached a height of about 23,000 feet on it, looked down on to the Raikana glacier system and found that the precipices of the southern face of our mountain cut us off from Kamet. Consequently, it was not till 1913 that my party made an attack on Kamet from the E., camping on a 23,000 feet<sup>2</sup> saddle between Kamet and Strachey's Peak thereby being the first party to set foot on Kamet itself; for the Schlagintweits, as I have explained, and the late Captain Slingsby, no less than my own parties previous to 1913, had fallen into the error of attacking the smaller Strachey's Peak (Schlagintweit's 'Eastern Ibi Gamin,' 24,170 feet according to triangulation).

The central and greatest of the Ibi Gamin is now commonly known as Kamet. For its two lesser neighbours, hitherto nameless in the map, I suggest that the names given by Adolphe Schlagintweit in his panorama should be kept—that is to say, that the 24,200 feet peak would be Western Ibi Gamin, and Strachey's Peak, the 24,170 feet mountain so gallantly attacked by Adolphe and his brother, would be known as Eastern Ibi Gamin.

NOTE.—Captain Longstaff, who has explored on both sides of the Kamet group, is in agreement with the substance of the above article. I have also consulted the following:—

'Great Trigonometrical Survey of India,' Kumaon and Garhwal, 1 in. to 1 mile, sheet 19.

'Great Trigonometrical Survey of India,' Synoptical, vol. xxxv., with companion volume of charts.

'Six Months in the Himalaya,' by A. L. Munim (with maps).

'Reisen in Indien und Hochasien,' by Hermann von Schlagintweit

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<sup>1</sup> The late Captain Slingsby also referred to it as the '*Gensd'arme*' (see *Alpine Journal*, xxvii. 327). See also my 'Note on the Garwal Himalaya,' in which the point is discussed (*Alpine Journal*, xxvi. 435).

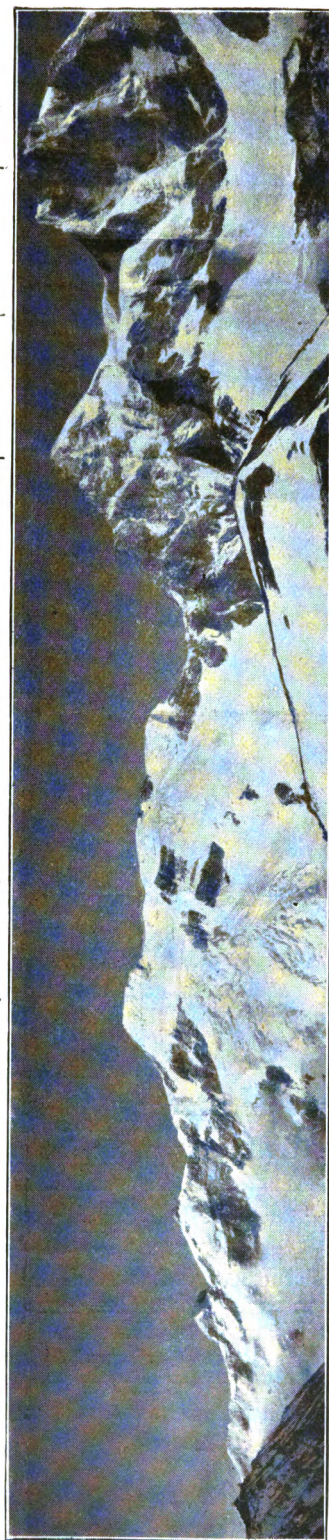
<sup>2</sup> This estimate was merely based on comparisons with the closely adjacent peaks of Kamet and 'Eastern Ibi Gamin' (Strachey's Peak). Both peaks have been triangulated, and I had repeatedly taken photographs from opposite sides of the saddle, showing the two mountains with the saddle between them.

23,000 ft. Saddle.  
Site of final camp.

Buttresses of Eastern Ibi Gamin,  
*alias* Strachey's Peak,  
*alias* the Gend'arme.

Mana Peak.

Kamet.



KAMET RANGE FROM E. FROM NEAR HEAD OF KAMET GLACIER.





vol. ii., 1871, chapter v., part 3, pp. 347 *et seq.* For panorama of Kamet (Ibi Gamin) group, see Gebirgsprofile II.

I am indebted to Mr. Heawood, librarian of the Royal Geographical Society, and to Mr. Allen, assistant map curator, for kindly supplying me with much useful information.

C. F. MEADE.

#### TITLES OF THE VIEWS OF KAMET.\*

- (1) *From South*.—Kamet with Ghastole Glacier.
- (2) *From South-West*.—Kamet showing Slingsby's Pass and the 'gendarme'-like appearance of Eastern Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Strachey's Peak).
- (3) *From South-West*.—Western Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Peak 48) and Slingsby's Pass. Eastern Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Strachey's Peak) and Kamet both in cloud.
- (4) *From West*.—Western Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Peak 48) and Eastern Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Strachey's Peak).—Kamet and Mana Peak showing 23,000 ft. saddle between Eastern Ibi Gamin and Kamet where Mr. C. F. Meade's final camp was pitched.
- (5) *From East*.—Kamet and Eastern Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Strachey's Peak) with Strachey's Glacier (tributary to the Raikana Glacier).
- (6) *From East*.—PANORAMA of Mana Peak, Kamet, and Eastern Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Strachey's Peak) showing the above-mentioned 23,000 ft. saddle between Kamet and Eastern Ibi Gamin.
- (7) Eastern Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Strachey's Peak) from the 23,000 ft. saddle between Kamet and Eastern Ibi Gamin, with view over Tibet.
- (8) Twin peaks of Western Ibi Gamin (*i.e.* Peak 48) from above Slingsby's Pass.

#### THE EARLY SWISS PIONEERS OF THE ALPS.

By DR. H. DÜBL.

#### INTRODUCTION.

AT the request of the Editors, I have undertaken to write for the ALPINE JOURNAL the history of the mountaineering work done by Swiss tourists and naturalists, surveyors, and guides, in the Alps of Switzerland and the adjacent countries, during the first half of the nineteenth century. This subject has already been dealt with by Mr. William Longman in some

\* The views are numbered.

chapters of his 'Modern Mountaineering and the History of the Alpine Club,'<sup>1</sup> especially as regards Monte Rosa, the Jungfrau, the Finsteraarhorn, the Lauteraarhorn, and the Wetterhörner; and a valuable contribution to the subject was made by Mr. Freshfield in his article on 'Placidus a Spescha, and Early Mountaineering in the Bündner Oberland.'<sup>2</sup> The history of the first and second ascents of the Jungfrau by the Meyers has been discussed by the Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge<sup>3</sup>; that of the Finsteraarhorn by Captain J. P. Farrar and Mr. Coolidge,<sup>4</sup> and to the latter writer we are also indebted for a short sketch of the life of Gottlieb Studer<sup>5</sup>; while, recently, good work has been done by Captain Farrar in clearing up the early attempts to reach the summit of the Jungfrau from the Rottal and in determining the rôle played by the guides Peter Baumann, Peter Bischoff, Hans and Christian Lauener, and the naturalist Franz Joseph Hugi, in those expeditions.<sup>6</sup> The 'Führerbücher' of the brothers Zumtaugwald, and the 'Travellers' Book' of the Hôtel Monte Rosa in Zermatt, have furnished instructive details bearing upon the part taken by Matthäus and Johann Zumtaugwald in the first passages of the Weissthor to Mattmark and Macugnaga, and in the first ascent of the second summit of Monte Rosa.<sup>7</sup> The literature of my subject is therefore very vast, and the printed documents and MSS. at my disposal would enable me to fill a good-sized volume. But in order not to tax the patience of my readers, I shall content myself with an outline, filling in only such details as are strictly necessary to make my story intelligible and coherent. I shall, moreover, confine myself to the summits of the Swiss Alps, except a very few allusions to Mont Blanc. I am obliged, on account of Father Placidus<sup>8</sup> and Rudolf Meyer, senior, to begin with the last two decades of the eighteenth century, and I shall carry my record of Alpine travel and scientific exploration down to the year 1860—a date mid-way between those of the founding of the English and Swiss Alpine Clubs. My paper, therefore, covers a period of about eighty years.

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<sup>1</sup> *A.J.* viii., Appendix, p. 26–80.

<sup>2</sup> *A.J.* x. 289–313.

<sup>3</sup> *A.J.* xvii. 392–404.

<sup>4</sup> *A.J.* xi. 369; xxiii. 418–421; xxvii. 263–297.

<sup>5</sup> *A.J.* xv. 343–348.

<sup>6</sup> *A.J.* xxx. 277–285; xxxi. 210–211.

<sup>7</sup> *A.J.* xxxi. 218, 222, 224.

<sup>8</sup> The notice of *Placidus a Spescha* is held over for subsequent publication.—*Note by the Editor.*

In this lapse of time mountaineering in Switzerland, as far as the Swiss pioneers are concerned, developed from a few isolated achievements, due to individual enterprise, into a sort of social current, requiring public organisation and official guidance. At the end of that period the climbing impulse had passed from a few old cities—such as Aarau, Soleure, Berne, Neuchâtel, Bâle, and Zurich, whence a few lovers of the Alps used to set out upon their well-prepared but rare expeditions—to a number of rapidly developing villages in the Alps—such as Zermatt, Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen, Pontresina—where a somewhat indifferent and as yet inexperienced crowd of tourists, gathering annually in search of health or amusement, began, about 1860, to avail themselves, in so far as their means and the occasion permitted, of the experience and mountain-craft which the guides had acquired in the service of the older Swiss pioneers and other strangers. I shall endeavour to show how this development went on and to whom it was due.

#### THE MEYER FAMILY AND THEIR ASSISTANTS.

It is—at least in Switzerland—without precedent that the same family, through three generations, contributed so much to Alpine investigation and quitted the field of their exploits so abruptly as the Meyers of Aarau. Indeed, their brilliant career lasted not more than thirty years in all.

The senior of the family, JOHANN RUDOLF MEYER, a citizen of Aarau, was born on February 25, 1789, and died on September 11, 1819. He is best known as the author of two remarkable works : ‘The Relief of the Alps, from the Lake of Geneva to the Lake of Constance,’ on the scale of 1 : 60,000, and the Atlas of Switzerland, in sixteen sheets, and a general map. The Relief was constructed between 1786 and 1797, at the cost of and under the personal inspection of Meyer in his house at Aarau, by the surveyors J. H. Weiss and J. E. Müller. A few smaller ones were made by Müller alone, especially one representing the Alps from Thoune to the Italian lakes, and from the source of the Rhone to the mouth of the Lötschenthal near Gampel. The Atlas was drawn, after a rough survey and an insufficient triangulation, by Weiss, in the years 1786–1797, and issued as the sheets were ready for publication : the first in 1796, and the last, a general map, in 1802. Further, a special map was published in 1796, bearing the title : ‘Carte d’une partie très intéressante de la Suisse à l’usage des voyageurs. Elle renferme principalement une partie du Canton de Berne et du Valais et

les glaciers qui dominant la frontière de l'Italie. Levée et dessinée trigonométriquement et géométriquement par J. H. Weiss au dépens de J. R. Meyer à Aarau.' That map, as well as Sheet 10 of the Atlas, served for the explorations of the Meyers in 1811 and 1812.

The preparation of the Relief and the Atlas necessitated a good deal of climbing. Thus JOHANN HEINRICH WEISS of Strassburg (1759-1826) ascended in 1787 the Titlis; in 1798 the Hangendgletscherhorn, and a point called by him 'Blaues Gletscherhorn,' on the Graugrat, between the Mattenalp and Guttannen, the Siedelhorn, and visited the Ober- and Unteraar Glaciers. He was accompanied by J. E. Müller to carry the theodolite. About 1796 Weiss crossed from the Grimsel by the Oberaar Glacier and Joch to the Fiescher Glacier, which he descended to Fiesch. 'Weiss and his companions were obliged to seek their way in and out of deep crevasses and to pass a night in the clefts of the eternal ice, where they burnt everything combustible with them to save them from death by the bitter cold.' About 1790, Weiss had the opportunity—so he tells us in a note to Sheet 14 of the Atlas—to fix from the height of some great glacier summits adjacent to Piedmont the direction of some considerable ice valleys setting forth from those points.' But these indications are too vague to allow us to say how far Weiss got in the Pennine Alps.

JOACHIM EUGÈNE MÜLLER of Engelberg (1752-1832) was the companion of Herr J. R. Meyer on an ascent of the Titlis in 1787. He climbed with Weiss, and occasionally with Professor Tralles, in 1788. In 1789 he was surveying in the Bernese Oberland, where he ascended the Schilthorn and the Faulhorn, and in 1790 at Saanen, in the Pays d'en haut, and in the Lower Valais. In 1791 he, as he tells us, 'pervaded the whole Bernese and Valaisan high mountain-range through all the valleys from Mont Blanc to the Furka.' In 1792-1794 he was travelling, for the purpose of the Relief and the Atlas, in the cantons Uri (where he ascended the Uri-Rothstock), Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, Glarus, the Grisons, Appenzell, Zürich, and even in Vorarlberg. In 1795, with three men from Engelberg, he ascended the Titlis, sketched the panorama from the Scesaplana to the Niesen, and found by measurement the icy calotte to be 172 French feet thick. After a long interruption, caused by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, Müller finished his Alpine work in 1811-1813 by constructing cadastral signals, at the instigation of Weiss, on the Titlis, the Six Madun, and other summits.



Johann Rudolf Meyer himself was a capable mountaineer. About 1765 he undertook 'a voyage in the then hardly known districts of the Gotthard and the Bernese Oberland.' In 1787 he ascended the Titlis with Weiss and Müller, as we have seen. We know of no other climbs of his ; for a passage of the Tschingelpass, in 1790, sometimes credited to him, was really made by his elder son.

JOHANN RUDOLF MEYER II. was born on April 3, 1768, and died in 1825. He had some reputation as a naturalist, and published, from 1806 onwards, a series of articles on natural science, in a magazine issued by himself at Aarau; while his principal occupation was the management of a silk-ribbon mill, founded and brought to great prosperity by his father. There is some mystery about a route made by him in 1790. A certain L., who crossed the Tschingelpass in 1808 with two of Meyer's guides,<sup>9</sup> writing of Meyer's journey, says : 'As his guides were unacquainted with the glacier, they clambered, not without danger to their lives, up the much more precipitous and from below nearly inaccessible N. side of the glacier [and descended] into the Valaisan Gastern Valley.' The last three words are nonsense ; and as the same author later on says that Meyer had successfully passed between some séracs on the N. side of the glacier, and as the map in Meyer's 1813 pamphlet shows tracks on the Gastern or Kander Glacier, one on its right, the other on its left bank, and another to the top only of the Petersgrat, we may reasonably presume that J. R. Meyer, in 1790, followed to some extent the four miners who, on July 12, 1783—crossed from Trachsellaunin to the Löt-schenthal,<sup>10</sup> while he mounted to the Petersgrat, followed thence the frontier ridge between the cantons of Berne and Valais, and descended somewhere near the Sackhorn (it is named in the 1813 pamphlet as well as on Sheet 10 of the Atlas) to join the Tschingelpass route at Selden in the Gastern Valley. As this is an obviously roundabout route from Lauterbrunnen to Kandersteg, and as L.'s statement is very indefinite, I suggest that young Meyer may have been simply exploring for his father's Relief and Atlas. It would be interesting to know the names of Meyer's guides in 1790. One is termed a Lauterbrunnen man, another a chamois hunter. But, as Capt. Farrar observes,<sup>11</sup> they cannot have been PETER BISCHOFF

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<sup>9</sup> *A.J.* xxxi. 211.

<sup>10</sup> *Climber's Guide to the Bernese Oberland*, vol. i. pt. 1, p. 51.

<sup>11</sup> *A.J.* vol. xxx. 283.

and JOHANN LAUENER, as the former was born in 1777 and the latter in 1788 only. At all events, the passage of the Tschingel-pass in 1790 was a daring enterprise, and had been anticipated only once—namely, by the Bernese surveyor Samuel Bodmer, about 1710, whose journey was never published.

It was not till twenty years later that Johann Rudolf Meyer II., together with his younger brother HIERONYMUS (born September 17, 1769), set out again to explore the mountain region between the Bernese Oberland and the Upper Valais. It will save trouble if we begin our description of their exploration by working out from their own words,<sup>12</sup> and the maps at their disposal, what had been previously done. We learn that some enterprising men had crossed from the Urbachthal to the Lauteraar Glacier and the Grimsel; others had ascended the Lauteraar Glacier for an hour and a half. The Oberaar Glacier and the Studerfirn were known and mapped. So also the Fiescher Glacier, from the foot of the Finsteraarhorn to its end in the Fiescherthal; the same was the case with the Märjelenalp and the Aletsch Lake. The Lötschenthal was known right to the Lötschenlücke; and there was a tradition that once a man, guided by a will-o'-the-wisp in moonlight, had passed over the Aletsch Glacier to the Lötschenthal. The Aletsch Glacier had been ascended from the gorge of the Massa or 'Blinden-tobel' inwards for about two hours. The Aletsch huts, the Great Aletsch Glacier, and the Ober Aletsch Glacier, are marked on Sheet 10 of the Weiss Atlas. But nobody in 1811 was aware that it was possible to cross from the Grimsel to Grindelwald by the Lauteraarjoch or the Strahlegg, and from the Fiescher Glacier by the Grünhornlücke to the Aletsch Glacier. Thus to approach their goal, the Jungfrau, the brothers Meyer had two ways open: one from Naters by the Aletsch Glacier, the other from Gampel by the Lötschenthal and the Lötschenlücke. For they doubted the possibility of reopening the route by which in 1712 some Bernese peasants, to escape persecution by the Catholics in Valais, were said to have crossed from the Fiescherthal to Grindelwald.

They started with a good outfit, warm clothes, a great black linen sheet that served as a tent and was destined to be used as a flag on the top of the Jungfrau, ropes, alpenstocks, a ladder, dark veils, but without scientific instruments, esteeming such

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<sup>12</sup> *Reise auf den Jungfrau-Gletscher und Ersteigung seines Gipfels, von Joh. Rudolph Meyer und Hieronymus Meyer aus Aarau im Augustmonat 1811 unternommen*, pp. 6-9.

things a hindrance for venturesome climbers. The brothers, with three servants, left Aarau on July 29, 1811, took their way by the Entlibuch, the Brünig, Meiringen, and Guttannen, where they picked up as porter one KASPER HUBER, a servant of the innkeeper. They reached the Grimsel the next day, July 30 (a remarkable speed for those days of no carriage-roads), and crossed it to Ulrichen in the Valais. At Fiesch they changed their original intention, dreading the length of the approach to the Jungfrau by the Aletsch Glacier. So there remained the way by the Lötschenthal, at one of the alps of which they were told they would find one of the boldest chamois hunters, who could guide them by his experience. They accordingly left the Rhone valley somewhere between Fiesch and Naters (I think at Laax), 'kept high up on the mountain-side, with different guides, crossed some mountain ridges, and reached the uppermost alp of the Lötschenthal' on the evening of July 31. This must mean that the party covered in one day the journey from Laax by the Bettmer- and Riederalps, the Riederfurka, across the Aletsch Glacier to the huts of Oberaletsch and by the Ober Aletsch Glacier and the *Beichpass* to Färlalp or Gletscherstafel. I lay stress on this fact because it proves that the brothers Meyer were trained men and enduring and fast walkers. We learn, indeed, from others that J. R. Meyer II., and so also his son Joh. Rudolf III., were men of great strength and renowned athletes. At the 'Lötschenalp' they found two chamois hunters, ready to go, provided both went, for 25 batzen (about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  francs) a day. Their names are ALOYS VOLKER and HANS JOSEPH BORTES. They were from Fiesch or the neighbourhood, and herded cattle only occasionally in the Lötschenthal. In 1812 we find them herding cattle at the Märjelenalp, when not engaged as guides by the Meyer family. The Meyers' party—consisting of eight men—started from the uppermost chalet in the Lötschenthal at 5 A.M. on August 1, 1811. In four hours they gained the Lötschenlücke, whence they sent back their three servants from Aarau, who proved too timid for glacier work. The other five descended the Aletschfirn and spent the afternoon reconnoitring the position of and access to the Jungfrau. They bivouacked on some rocks 'on the N. side of the glacier, where the Lötschen Glacier [Aletschfirn] unites with the Aletsch Glacier.' The spot is indicated on the map in the 1813 pamphlet, and is marked 2967 on the Siegfried map. Near the bivouac place, they found the skeletons of two chamois. The next day, August 2, at dawn, they attempted the Jungfrau from the S., struggling up a much crevassed

'glacier valley descending from the Jungfrau and the Mönch.' where the ladder was more than once required. The map in the 1813 pamphlet makes this to be the Kranzbergfirn of the modern maps. But at 10 A.M., when the top of the Jungfrau seemed not very distant and only 600 feet higher, the 'Föhn' forced them to retire. At 2 P.M. they were back at their night's quarters and started out again to reconnoitre. This time they ascended 'another glacier valley, more to the E., likewise descending from the Jungfrau'—evidently the modern Ewig-schneefeld. The narrative proceeds: 'We now learned the connexion between the Aletsch and the Fiescher Glaciers as well as the continuous connexion (*Zusammenhang*) between the same and the Lauter-, Finster- and Ober-Aargletscher, which all unite behind the Jungfrau in valleys hours long.' They discovered also a better access to the Jungfrau from the E., and moved their bivouac to 'a point of considerable height, half an hour S. of the Mönch, at the foot of the Jungfrau Glacier,' to the E. of and higher than the first night's quarters. The spot is not indicated on their map, but is clearly at the foot of the Trugberg, 2830 m. This I conclude from a geognostical observation of J. R. Meyer,<sup>13</sup> corroborated by Edm. v. Fellenberg.<sup>14</sup> It is not necessary to presume that the Meyers confounded the Mönch with the Trugberg, which does not figure on their map, measured on which P. 2830 is about half to three-quarter hour S. of the Mönch, whose position is rightly indicated on Sheet 30 of the Atlas, which served as base for the 1813 map and for the 1811 text.

Early on the morning of August 3, 1811, the brothers Meyer, with Volker and Bortes, started for the ascent of the Jungfrau, sending Huber back over the Lötschenlücke to bring more fuel and food from the chalets in the Lötschenthal to their first bivouac. The uncertainty of their exact route is mainly the fault of the 1813 map, on which it is marked *behind* [W. of], and finally along the crest of a continuous arête, descending from the top of the Jungfrau to the spot marked 'Vorjähriges Nachtlager,' or bivouac of August 1 and 3, 1811, and dividing what we now call the Kranzbergfirn from the Jungfraufirn. This is doubtless the direction of their first attempt on August 2, but cannot be reconciled with the events of August 3, when the Meyers, starting from their bivouac at the foot of the Trugberg as 'the first

<sup>13</sup> *Reise auf den Jungfraugletscher*, etc., p. 36.

<sup>14</sup> *Jahrbuch S.A.C.* xiv. 270.

rays of the sun just reddened the rocks of the Jungfrau, rising close before us. We now proceeded up the masses of ice and snow which descend from the Jungfrau. We hoped, as the mountain was now quite close, to gain the summit by following this same snow-slope. But what we took for a continuous snow-field was an optical delusion, for, suddenly, in front of us, there appeared a *Tiefe* [descent] of 40 to 50 feet, to which one could only descend with difficulty; left and right slopes fell away steeply and deep. The way down to the foot of the summit of the Jungfrau lay along a sharp glacier-ridge or saddle. We attached, where this ridge commenced, a rope to an alpenstock driven deep into the snow, and sat ourselves astraddle on the sharp snow-saddle; thus we slid, one by one, safely down and came to the foot of the summit, to which we approached quite close, passing in and out between rocky points projecting from the ice' (Pamphlet 1811, pp. 19-20). I think I am right in supposing that, just before the short descent, the point gained was about 3980 m., between the Rottalhorn and the Rottalsattel, and at the W. or upper end of a spur ending at P. 3388 in the Jungfraufirn. This spur is distinctly marked on Gottlieb Studer's panoramas from the Gamchilücke and the Eggishorn,<sup>15</sup> and its highest point (the Rottalhorn?) is called by Studer, Kranzberg. Even in our day the guides persist in applying to the same spur the name Kranzbergeck.<sup>16</sup> They had taken to the Rottalsattel about four hours, but the last 309 metres of the arête leading to the summit took them six hours. The leader from time to time fixed a rope in order to help the others. Note they had neither axes nor crampons. So progress was necessarily slow. Shortly before the top, a crevasse—a yard broad—that crossed the very narrow arête, gave them some trouble. They gained the top at 2 p.m., and stayed half an hour, enjoying the view and the topographical instruction it gave them. They felt no ill effects from fatigue, cold, or the rarefaction of the air. A sheet of black linen, nailed to one of the side-rails of their ladder, driven seven feet deep into the snow of the summit, served as a flag. They redescended to the Rottalsattel with great care, often backwards. When they arrived at the upper end of the Kranzbergeck, one of the hunters

<sup>15</sup> See *Atlas zu G. Studer's topographischen Mittheilungen aus dem Alpengebirge*, Sheets II. and V., 1. The panorama from the Gamchilücke was drawn August 30, 1840; that from the Eggishorn, August 15, 1842.

<sup>16</sup> See *Climbers' Guide to the Bernese Oberland*, vol. i., pt. 1, p. 90.

collapsed from the strain. As he was nearly blind, his eyes were bandaged, and he had to be led on the rope for the rest of the descent. Nevertheless, they reached before dark their first night's quarters at the foot of the Kranzberg, where a good fire and fresh provisions, brought by Huber, ensured them refreshment and a comfortable night. On the early morning of August 4, they returned by the Lötschenlücke to the Löt-schenalp. Here they took leave of the two hunters, who assured them that they were ready to accompany them next year wherever they wished to go. The brothers and Huber went high up, along the snows, over the mountains, down to Fiesch [presumably over the Beich Pass, 'Bernese Oberland, edition 1910, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 144], for on August 5 they recrossed the Grimsel, where they wrote down the first record of their expedition in the 'Fremdenbuch' of the (then) tenant of the hospital, Melchior von Bergen.<sup>17</sup>

The news of the first ascent of the Jungfrau spread rapidly and excited great interest in Switzerland, Germany, and even France, but, after a time, was received with incredulity. This provoked an excited and occasionally heated discussion, filling many pages in a Bernese magazine. It would be interesting, from a historical and psychological point of view, to give full details of these altercations, but they would lead us much too far. Still, as something has been already said about the matter in this JOURNAL,<sup>18</sup> I may perhaps be allowed to add a few dates and facts. The first notice of the climb appeared at Berne, Saturday, August 10, 1811, in No. 126 of the *Gemeinnützige schweizerische Nachrichten*. It bears the date: Berne, July 9 [sic], and runs as follows (I translate *verbatim*): 'In the first days of this month, August, two rich Swiss private individuals, whom, for the moment, we do not, out of discretion, name, accomplished what till now seemed impossible—namely, the ascent of one of our highest ice mountains, the *Jungfrau*. After they had passed three days and four nights continuously upon fields of ice and snow, and after some attempts by the Aletschglacier had failed, these Swiss nature-lovers succeeded at last, on August 3, in gaining the summit of the Jungfrau, planting there a black flag. A more explicit description of that interesting enterprise will no doubt appear soon.' There is no signature; but we learn

<sup>17</sup> It was published in 1817 by Professor J. Rud. Wyss in his *Reise in das Berner Oberland*, vol. ii. p. 753, note.

<sup>18</sup> Vol. xxix. 333-336.

from a later remark in the same journal that this notice was sent to the editor, Albert Höpfner, by Rudolf Meyer himself, with the request to suppress their names till they themselves had an opportunity to publish a record of their exploits. The full record, signed by the two brothers, was published practically in identical terms—namely, in Nos. 185 to 189, August 27 to September 3, 1811, of the said *Gemeinnützige schweizerische Nachrichten*, and in Nos. 68 and 69, Saturday and Wednesday, August 24 and 28, 1811, of *Zschekke's Miscellen für die neueste Weltkunde*. A reprint from the *Miscellen* was issued shortly afterwards at Aarau, by the printer H. R. Sauerländer, who in the 1813 pamphlet draws attention to the 1811 pamphlet, and adds that copies were to be had for '5 Gr[oschen] oder 16 Kr[euzer].' The original short notice was published in French in the *Gazette de Lausanne* of Août 20, 1811, and the full record in the issue of October 4, 1811, both taken from the Bernese journal. The translation contains many mistakes, and omits all topographical details. Hardly was the publication (at the end of August 1811) complete before the critics got to work. The principal doubters were Höpfner, Hans Conrad Escher of Zurich, and Professor Trechsel of Berne. Höpfner was himself an experienced mountaineer; he had been on the Mer de Glace at Chamonix, and on the Aar-glaciers, and he took great interest in mountain exploration.<sup>19</sup> On September 4, 1811, he published an editorial note in No. 140 of his above magazine, stating that, as an '*ehemaliger Bergläufer und Bergbesteiger*,' he found great pleasure in publishing the short notice and the full description of the ascent of the Jungfrau. But he, like many others who had sent in queries and remarks, was surprised that the Meyers did not give the names of their guides, or of the alp in the Lötschenthal where they took them from. Nobody had been able to identify the man from Guttannen who had been with them on the Jungfrau; nobody had seen the flag on the top of the Jungfrau. Höpfner criticised also their physiological experiments compared with those of De Saussure on the Mont Blanc, and he adds the following queer notice: 'It is well known that this indefatigable naturalist caught the germ of his subsequent fatal illness on that ascent.' Even after a verbal testimony of the two Valaisan hunters had been published by the Meyers, Höpfner

<sup>19</sup> See my book, *Paccard v. Balmat*, pp. 63, 66–67, and 234, note 72, Höpfner published, in 1787, a German version of Bourrit's ill-advised letter of September 20, 1786.

persisted in saying (No. 148 of his magazine, September 18) that more investigation was needed.

JOHANN CONRAD ESCHER, immortalised by the canalisation of the Linth River, also expressed doubts as to the geognostical facts in Meyer's report. He was the great authority on such matters in Switzerland, and had travelled much in East Switzerland and in the Valais, of the frontier ridge between which and Piedmont he had, in 1797, prepared a map. He had, however, never been nearer to the Jungfrau than the Sulegg,<sup>20</sup> and his criticism of Meyer's scientific observations is somewhat theoretical. He seems to argue from the title, 'Reise auf den Jungfraugletscher,' that perhaps the Meyers 'reached only the top of one of the highest secondary glaciers'; and he asserted, borne out by Höpfner and others, that the summit of the Jungfrau, as well as those of the Mönch, the Eiger, and the Wetterhorn, consisted of limestone. Since Rudolf Meyer, who is responsible for the geognostical chapter in the 1811 pamphlet, noted that the last 600 feet of his mountain were composed of 'strata of mica, hornblende, and clay, standing upright,' his critics were inclined to think that he had not reached the very top. But these arguments are not sound. To call an ice-covered ridge between two valleys a 'glätscher' was the fashion of the time, ever since Aegidius Tschudi and Josias Simler, and we see this same denomination used by 'L.,' already mentioned, as late as 1808. But for us, all that the Meyers say about the conditions of the rocks above the Rottalsattel and the final snow-crest is clear proof that they were on the very top (4296 m.) of the Jungfrau. Rudolf Meyer must also be credited with the discovery of some cuneiform limestone bands that penetrate into the crystalline strata of the range of the Jungfrau.

Professor FRIEDRICH TRECHSEL (1776-1849), who was, in 1811 with J. J. Frey and others, occupied in the triangulation of the Canton of Berne, laid stress on the fact that, when on the summits of the Hohgant and the Niesen, in August 1811, he, even with a six-foot Dollond telescope, saw no flag on the Jungfrau. But he was candid enough to add that on August 4-6 a storm raged on the high mountains, which might have blown it down or buried it in snow.

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<sup>20</sup> See my book, *Paccard v. Balmat*, pp. 155-6 and 238, note 152. Escher was, in 1808, a great admirer of the 'despised and rejected Jacques Balmat,' whom he rates far higher than the wealthy De Saussure.



The brothers Meyer did their best to clear up the matter. They sent men with telescopes to the Oberland to search for the flag; they had the two hunters come to Aarau to be interviewed; they published their names, as well as that of the 'man from Guttannen'; they announced their intention to make a second and more scientific expedition in the same region next summer, and invited their critics to accompany them there.<sup>21</sup> In his reply to the 'somewhat bitter and elusive answer of the brothers Meyer,' and to some remarks in other journals like *Die allgemeine Zeitung*, *Das Morgenblatt*, *Der Erzähler*, etc., Höpfner<sup>22</sup> confirms two facts: (1) That he and Escher never doubted the veracity of the Meyers as gentlemen, nor their ability to climb high mountains; (2) that if the two hunters really gained the said highest summits—i.e. *das Jungfrau-Eisgebirge oder einen seiner Gipfel*—Rudolf Meyer, jun., as a well-known mountaineer, was the man to follow them. But Höpfner and Escher persisted in contending that the description of the journey was deficient in the geognostical as well as in the descriptive and picturesque respects.

Thus ended the controversy with a sort of compromise that gave satisfaction to neither party. But in the course of the discussion Alpine literature was enriched by two records not before published: one of the traverse of the *Gaulipass*, by Herren Rudolf Stettler of Zofingen and von Graffenried of Berne, on August 10, 1795<sup>23</sup>; the other of the same passage by Herr Arnold Brügger of Meiringen, on August 5, 1802.<sup>24</sup> As a contribution to Alpine humour, we translate (from the German, as we have not seen the French original text) a notice that appeared in the *Moniteur de Paris*, Septembre 8, 1811. The extract given by Höpfner runs as follows: 'Rudolf Meyer recognised the summit of the Jungfrau. They ascended it as best they could, and bivouacked there for the night. Fortune would have it that two lean chamois had strayed thither. They were killed, and a great fire lighted to cook them. The night was not so cold as was expected,' etc.

We can well understand why the Meyers took great care to

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<sup>21</sup> *Gemeinnützige schweizerische Nachrichten*, No. 160, October 9, 1811.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* No. 173, November 1, 1811.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 152, September 25, 1811; reprinted in *Jahrbuch S.A.C.* xxxi. 355–61.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* No. 148, September 18, 1811. See also *Reise in das Berner Oberland*, ii. 719, note.

thoroughly prepare their next expedition and to secure the best results. Three objects were aimed at : first, to dissipate all doubts as to the ascent of the Jungfrau ; next, to climb the Finsteraarhorn ; lastly, to make glacier measurements and scientific observations. In all these respects they were fortunate ; but, nevertheless, they were destined to meet with disbelief as to their principal exploit—if not immediately, yet later, and in a disagreeable manner. Our knowledge of their deeds in this year is based, save for some short notices in contemporary journals, on two accounts given by the Meyers themselves—namely, the pamphlet ‘*Reise auf die Eisgebirge des Kantons Bern und Ersteigung ihrer höchsten Gipfel im Sommer 1812. Mit einer Karte der bereiseten Gletscher, Aarau 1813,*’ edited by H. Zschokke, and an article in the *Alpenrosen auf das Jahr 1852*, entitled : ‘*Erinnerungen an Prof. Dr. Rudolf Meyer.*’ The latter is the original account, written by Rudolf Meyer and Gottlieb Meyer, the young sons of the said Joh. Rudolf Meyer (II.) and grandsons of the patriarch of the family, Joh. Rudolf (still living in 1812), the promoter of the Atlas and Relief of Switzerland, in 1812, but only published in 1852, and corrects some statements in the 1813 pamphlet, made by Zschokke ; but we must deplore that Dr. Rudolf Meyer, after the altercation with Professor Hugi, in 1831, did not, before his death two years later, clear up the doubtful points. We shall now describe the events as we understand them to have occurred.

A considerable party, consisting of Joh. Rudolf II. and Hieronymus Meyer, the conquerors of the Jungfrau in 1811, Dr. Thilo, teacher at the Gymnasium of Aarau, Rudolf and Gottlieb Meyer (sons of J. R. II.), left Aarau, on July 24, 1812. Their equipment included a complete camping-outfit, ropes, alpenstocks, crampons, green veils, and spectacles, as well as physical and mathematical instruments. Barometers and thermometers were daily observed at Aarau and on the lakes of Lucerne and Thoune, to control the observations to be made on the high mountains.

Of this party the principal actor merits a short biographical notice. JOHANN RUDOLF MEYER III., generally known as Dr. Rudolf Meyer, born March 6, 1791, was educated at Aarau, and, with his younger brother GOTTLIEB, attended, about 1801, Pestalozzi’s celebrated school, then at Burgdorf in the Canton of Berne. From 1806 till 1809 he was a pupil of the Gymnasium in his native town. In 1809 he went to the University of Tübingen, where he remained four years,

studying medicine. After taking his degree as M.D. [at Tübingen, he travelled through Bohemia, Saxony, the north of Germany, and the Danish Islands; completed his scientific education at Freiburg, Berlin, and Göttingen, and returned to Aarau in 1815. He married in 1817; lived four years at Constance, where he wrote a compendium of natural philosophy, called 'Geister der Natur.' In 1821 he was elected professor of natural science at the Gymnasium of Aarau. These functions, and other civil duties, tied him to his native town and permitted only one considerable absence—a journey to London and Paris, in 1824. In his youth, he was an active gymnast and a walker of great endurance. In later years his health weakened; he fell ill in 1831, recovered for a short time, but died from gout on November 6, 1833.

About his brother GOTTLIEB we know little. He was born April 28, 1793. He seems to have followed his father in the management of the silk manufactory, and died on September 3, 1829, leaving a son and a daughter.

We return now to the events of 1812. The five travellers were accompanied by several porters and four guides: Aloys Volker, Joseph Bortes, Caspar Huber, and Arnold Abbühl. The latter figures in the Meyers' company here for the first time.

I find it necessary to clear up, once and for all, various misapprehensions as to his origin. In the 1813 pamphlet, and even in the original account, he is called 'Arnold von Melchthal,' and described as 'Knecht' of the landlord at the Grimsel hospice. Although this misleading designation was corrected as early as 1817, by J. R. Wyss,<sup>25</sup> most authors, and even I in the second edition of Studer's 'Ueber Eis und Schnee,'<sup>26</sup> were induced to think he came from the valley of the Melchaa, in the Canton of Unterwalden. Now, looking carefully at Rudolf Meyer's text, one ought to have seen that the romantic young man called his brave guide 'von Melchthal' because his mind was full of Schiller's patriotic Swiss play, 'Wilhelm Tell,' published in 1803. In truth, Arnold's home was at Im Boden, near Guttannen, where he was visited by Pfarrer J. Schweizer, on September 13, 1821.<sup>27</sup> I am indebted to the good offices of Herr K. Nägeli of Guttannen for the following details about the Abbühl family.

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<sup>25</sup> *Reise in das Berner Oberland*, ii. 753, note.

<sup>26</sup> Vol. i. 96.

<sup>27</sup> *Alpenrosen auf das Jahr 1827*, p. 319.

The name figures in the registers of Guttannen as early as 1715. A Christian Abbühl died there in 1731; a Melchior Abbühl, the grandfather of our man, was killed by the Spreitlauri Avalanche, on March 14, 1748. Arnold is a frequent Christian name in that family. The father of Arnold married Anna Ott, and Arnold was baptised on September 22, 1782; he married, on March 26, 1816, a cousin, Katharina, daughter of Christian Huber and Margaretha Abbühl, widow of Ulrich von Bergen and sister of his comrade of 1812, Kaspar Huber. They had two sons, Arnold, baptised February 6, 1820, and Kaspar, born April 28, 1823. This Arnold emigrated, between 1850 and 1854, with his family to America. Kaspar married, on May 11, 1854, Katharina von Weissenfuh, and died on October 13, 1883. A son, Arnold, born December 12, 1856, perished in a 'Schneeschild,' on January 21, 1896; another, Melchior, went to America; a third, Kaspar, born July 12, 1863, is a peasant still living below the 'Hochfuh,' near Guttannen.

Arnold, of Finsteraarhorn fame, met prematurely with a death not uncommon at Guttannen. On March 3, 1830, he, with seven others, was buried by an avalanche near the Grimsel hospice, and his corpse was found on June 26, in the Grimsel lake. On the death-roll he is described as former 'chorrichter' or member of the local bench. So it would seem that he was well esteemed in his native village.

No doubt Kaspar Huber was engaged by the Meyers at Guttannen, and Abbühl at the Grimsel, the same as in 1811. Thither had also come from the Fiescherthal the two Valaisan hunters, Volker and Bortes. The Meyers themselves arrived at the Grimsel at noon, July 25. As in 1811, they had taken their way by Lucerne, the Brünig, and Oberhasli, travelling fast. Towards evening the united party left the hospice and went by the Kessithurm route to the Oberraaralp, where they passed the night in a Valaisan goatherd's hut. On the early morning of July 26, they continued their journey, crossed the Oberraarjoch to the Studerfirn, and ascended the Rothhornsattel or Gemslücke, where they found their father Joh. Rudolf Meyer, who, on the previous day, with a young shepherd, had pushed as far as the foot of the Finsteraarhorn, but had been overtaken by the dark, and obliged to pass a very uncomfortable night without fire and covering. The party built on the Gemslücke a rough stone hut, covered with their alpenstocks and a tent cloth. Therein they passed two nights and one day, as a raging storm with snow and bitter cold

prevented all further climbing. On the morning of July 28 they left their instruments in the snow-filled hut and went back the same way to the Grimsel. Here they remained till August 14. Some of the party returned to Aarau. The others, on the rare days when the weather cleared up, made easy walks in the neighbourhood, ascended the Zinkenstock, the 'Fischschwanz' (?), the Siedelhorn, and visited the Unter- and Finsteraar Glaciers.

On the morning of August 15 Joh. Rudolf Meyer, the younger or III., with Volker, Bortes, Abbühl, and Huber, started for the ascent of the Finsteraarhorn.

The text of the pamphlet of 1818 and of the original description written by the Meyers in 1812, but only published in 1852, together with literal translations, are given in Captain Farrar's article, published in the *ALPINE JOURNAL*, xxvii. 269-78, to which I must refer the reader.

I am well aware that, by accepting Farrar's conclusion as to the point where Meyer stayed behind, which Farrar calls 'Meyer's Peak,' I give up a strong point on which Dr. Coolidge, Professor Lüders and I rely to oppose Farrar's argument based on the 'clock evidence.' It seems indeed more reasonable that a stiff walk of about eight hours brought the whole party (five men) from the Gemslücke to the 'Vorgipfel' (height about 4165 m., horizontal distance from the summit 280 m.), and that an arduous climb of three hours brought the three guides to the only 110 mètres higher summit of the Finsteraarhorn, rather than to allow eight hours for the ascent from the Gemslücke to the so-called Meyer's Peak (height about 3908 m.) and to squeeze the remaining 850 m. of distance and 872 m. of elevation into three hours' climbing. But as this consideration of time is, in my opinion, not a decisive point, and as I am prepared to produce good evidence that Meyer's three guides really reached P. 4268, *i.e.* the top of the Finsteraarhorn, we admit, with Captain Farrar, that they started from Meyer's Peak and *not* from the minor summit. In my opinion, every statement in the account, if not every word, deserves credit. Nothing in it, in my view, is inconsistent with the experience of others over the same ground. No detail save the clock evidence is *a priori* impossible.

I lay stress on three points. (1) From Meyer's Peak the minor summit can be seen as well as the southern edge of the real top, and both points are clearly distinct. This, I argue mainly from a photograph which my son Hans, a Federal surveyor, took from the Finsteraarhorn in 1914 (see 'S.A.C.J.,'

vol. i., p. 188, and 'A.J.,' xxxi. 280). Now, if the three men had remained half an hour on the minor summit, Dr. Meyer could easily make out that they were not on the highest point of the mountain. (2) The guides related that they had seen the lake of Thoune glittering in the sinking sun. Now, from the calculations of my son, from the summit of the Finsteraarhorn three different bits of the lake are visible, best between Hilterfingen and Gwatt at the lower end. Farrar wonders at the guides' recording detail, which does not thrust itself on the observer. But the two Valaisans may have been interested in a lake crossed travelling to or from Aarau in the autumn of 1811. (8) They planted a flag which Meyer observed from his resting-place with a telescope. And with the same instrument, which must have been an excellent one, he saw, on September 8, from near the Abschwung the flagstaff planted, on August 15, by the guides on the 'highest point of the Finsteraarhorn' which, from this point, cannot be mistaken. A few hours later, from the top of the Strahlegg, he observed his brother Gottlieb with one guide (he noted even the absence of the second man) planting a flag on the top of the Jungfrau. And this flag was seen afterwards from the Tschuggen and even from Unterseen. Thus, if Meyer was right in making out at 2 p.m. a flag at a distance of about 13 kilomètres, we may presume that he was not mistaken when he observed, at 10 a.m., a flagstaff only 3 kilomètres distant. Of Farrar's principal arguments there remains, besides the Abbühl-Hugi incident, with which I shall deal later, only the 'clock evidence.' Certainly, three hours from Meyer's Peak to the actual summit and, say, one hour and a half for the return, are times that seem *prima facie* improbable. But, in fact, they are little more than the 'fastest on record,' and I think Captain Farrar is wrong in assuming that on August 15, 1812, the conditions on the S.E. arête, between Meyer's Peak and the summit, were bad. The weather was fine all the day long and only the last rocks near the summit were glazed with ice. So it was, to say the least, not impossible for the three guides, not hampered by 'Herrschaft,' to make the ascent in three hours and the descent in half the time. And, of course, they were in a hurry.

The morning after the ascent, the party redescended to the crevassed Fiescher Glacier and crossed a gap 'between Fiescherhorn and Walcher,' i.e. the Grünhornlücke, to the Aletsch Glacier and the huts of the Märjelenalp. Inflamed eyes did not allow them to climb for six days, although the weather

mended. It is said that Meyer used to swim among the icebergs of the Märjelsee.<sup>28</sup>

On August 24 they started once more to ascend the Finsteraarhorn from the West, but, arrived at the foot of the 'Grünen Horn,'<sup>29</sup> they found their fellow-travellers, Hieronymus Meyer, Dr. Thilo, and Gottlieb Meyer. They had come, the previous day, in dull weather, with some guides and porters from the Grimsel by the Oberaarjoch, the Rothhornsattel, and the Grünhornlücke. The united parties built a hut on the flowery 'Grüne Horn' where they remained two days and three nights, exploring the adjacent glaciers, experimenting on colours, and collecting plants and minerals. The weather was foggy and the proposal to ascend the Jungfrau was given up. On August 26 they measured a base line of 5500 feet on the glacier and then retired, in rain and snow, to the Märjelenalp. There they remained a week, but the bad weather allowed no climbing. So, as on September 1 the Aletsch lake was definitely frozen and the herdsmen left for the lower pastures, the majority of the party descended 'by the outlet of the wild Fiescher Glacier' to the Rhone valley and reached the Grimsel hospice on the afternoon of September 2.

Gottlieb Meyer with Volker and Bortes remained at the Märjelenalp, but leaving there at 5 p.m. on September 2 reached their hut on the 'Grüne Horn' at 9 p.m.

At 5 a.m. on September 3 they started for the Jungfrau.<sup>30</sup> They approached the summit which was visible from their tent, 'by the Eismeer between Mönch and Jungfrau. . . . Thinking to find a better way they ascended on the East'<sup>31</sup> side of the

<sup>28</sup> *Alpenrosen auf das Jahr 1852*, p. xxiv, note. The editor is not Zschokke (d. 1848), but an intimate friend of Dr. Meyer, and often heard him tell about his climbs.

<sup>29</sup> The bivouac there is indicated on the map annexed to the 1813 pamphlet. So is also that on the Gemslücke. The former is near the côte 2802 in the Siegfried map.

<sup>30</sup> Here also we possess two accounts, one by Zschokke in the 1813 pamphlet, and the original text as written by Gottlieb Meyer in 1812, published in the *Alpenrosen*, 1852. There are no substantial differences.

<sup>31</sup> This is, as we have seen, not accurate, but it corresponds with the lines dotted in for the routes of 1811 and 1812 in the 1813 map. So I maintain my opinion about the 1811 route, and think Gottlieb Meyer was in error on his map. In a wider sense we may even admit, as Dr. Coolidge suggests, that the expression 'opposite the last year's ascent' is correct, inasmuch as the route of 1811 passes south, that of 1812 north of the spur ending at P. 3388. At all

Jungfrau, i.e. exactly on that side which is quite opposite to the side chosen last year.' Very slowly, as one of the guides felt unwell, they ascended steep slopes of snow and ice, till at 11 o'clock they stood beneath the bergschrund that seams the whole mountain under the Rottalsattel. With great trouble they reached that col; so the hope of the guides to find a better way came to nought. They had previously roped, but now extended the distances between each other, and laid the two poles brought for flagstuffs across the bergschrund. The leader crawled over and began to hew steps with an axe for hands and feet. After he had worked up the ice-wall above the bergschrund for some height, he secured himself as best he could, and fastened the rope to his stick, which he drove into the wall. Then Meyer and the other guide followed, one by one, in the same manner. Lastly the poles were dragged up and the same manœuvre repeated, till they stood on the Rottalsattel. Thence a sharp arête led to the summit. They had to cut steps and progress was slow. One of the guides collapsed and had to be left behind for a time. The others reached the summit at 2 p.m. This time it was a sharp point and they had to cut steps in the ice to sit in. They saw no trace of the former flag. While the guide fastened a black cloth to one pole and stuck it and the other pole in the ice, Gottlieb Meyer noted the readings of his barometer and thermometer. Meanwhile the other guide who had found some water joined them, but both were exhausted and afraid, and renewed the vow already made on the Finsteraarhorn, to go a pilgrimage to Einsiedeln, if the Holy Virgin assured their return. They began the descent after half an hour, descended the steps under the Rottalsattel turning their faces to the wall, and jumping the bergschrund. At 7 p.m. they were back in their hut. The next morning mist prevented the intended glacier measurements, and as at 4 p.m. it began to snow they gave up the idea of climbing the Mönch and descended to the Märjelenalp, whence Gottlieb Meyer returned to Aarau, no doubt by the Grimsel.

As the weather cleared up towards evening on September 2, Rudolf Meyer, with Abbühl and Huber, set out from the Grimsel to reconnoitre the *Strahleggpass*.<sup>22</sup> An old legend

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events the itinerary of Gottlieb Meyer is quite clear. It is simply that followed nowadays from the Concordia hut.

<sup>22</sup> For this expedition we have also two relations, one in Zschokke's pamphlet (pp. 38-45), the other in the *Alpenrosen* of 1852 (pp. xxxii-xxxvii). Both agree in the essential points.



existed that about a century ago a certain Dr. Klaus with a hunter from Grindelwald crossed to the Grimsel over the glaciers, but nobody had followed these adventurers. The idea of the Meyers was to try to discover the legendary route, and also to explore the upper part of the Lauteraarglacier. The latter fell to Dr. Thilo and Hieronymus Meyer to do, and rendezvous was given for the night at a cave near the Lauteraarglacier, that had already served in the two passages of the Gauligrat mentioned above.<sup>33</sup> Rudolf Meyer and his guides went by the Unteraaralp to the source of the Aar and over the Unteraarglacier in five hours to the Abschwung, whence they studied their route of August 15 and observed the flagstaff on the Finsteraarhorn. Then they rounded the lower end of the Lauteraarhörner, penetrated into the ice-valley of the Strahleggfirn and mounted it for three hours to the foot of a rock-wall that formed the desired pass. They crossed the bergschrund by a snow-bridge and ascended in one hour the slaty rocks above it. So they arrived at the height of the Strahlegg just in time to see Gottlieb Meyer with one guide, planting his flag on the top of the Jungfrau.

We do not know exactly at which point Meyer and his men crossed the ridge dividing the Finsteraar basin from the Lower Grindelwald glacier. The dotted line in his map marks the passage at some distance from the 'Schreckhorn' (*recte* the Lauteraarhorn) over a ridge, shown incorrectly as connecting this peak and the Finsteraarhorn. So Dr. Meyer's passage may lie at the now-called Strahleggpass 3851 m., or (less probably) somewhat to the S.E. of it, near P. 3450, at the 'Alte Strahlegg' of the 'Climbers' Guide.'

At the first glance they could not make out how to descend on the Grindelwald side, but, as the guides (Meyer says 'we') had seen from the Finsteraarhorn that the Aar and Grindelwald glaciers were closely connected, they took courage and, turning to their left, descended quickly in the soft snow that balled under their feet, forming little avalanches, down to the foot of the 'Eishügel' (P. 3072 S. map). Had the slope been ice, the descent would have taken them too much time, as they were not well equipped—they had even left some outfit on the Strahleggfirn, as they intended to return from the pass and to accomplish the passage the next day with Dr. Thilo and

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<sup>33</sup> The spot is marked as 'Höhle' on Meyer's map, rather too low. It is quoted 2614 m. in the Siegfried map and named 'Jägerherberge' as by the Meyers.

Hieronymus Meyer. From the foot of the Strahlegg they saw, to their great relief, for nobody cared to return the same way, a way to a green 'Berglein,' to which 'alongside a precipice a snow band alternating with rocks descended.' So leaning on their sticks they glissaded down over the snow-slopes, and, avoiding the crevasses, they reached the pastures of the Grönenwäng. A further descent by the (vividly described) *mauvais pas* of the Enge and some rock steps brought them to the Lower Eismeer, which they crossed to the huts of the Stieregg. Farrar has well remarked on Meyer's calm yet vivid descriptions. Welcomed by the herdsmen, who could hardly believe they came from the Grimsel, they continued, after some rest, and arrived at Grindelwald towards 8 p.m. The next day they crossed the Great Scheidegg to Meiringen. There they waited for their fellow-travellers.

Dr. Thilo and Hieronymus Meyer, on September 8, had pushed their explorations to the foot of the Schreckhorn (properly Lauteraarhorn) and bivouacked at the 'Jägerherberge.' The next day they followed the traces of Rudolf Meyer's party to the Strahleggpas, but dense mists forced them to retire to the Grimsel. Together with Gottlieb Meyer, I suppose, they descended to Meiringen, whence, as the bad season was approaching, and they had, in an eventful campaign of six weeks, carried out their plans as far as the weather would permit, the whole party returned to Aarau.

The first report of these travels appeared in Höpfner's magazine.<sup>34</sup> 'A correspondent writes from Grindelwald, September 4 [1812], to the editor: "Yesterday evening, about 8 o'clock, Herr Rudolf Meyer (son (?)), of Aarau, arrived here by a very dangerous passage that had not been used for a century, over the Finsteraar- and Lower Grindelwald glaciers, accompanied by two Oberhasli men. They started at three a.m., from the Grimsel hospice, and were at three p.m. on the summit of the glacier-pass between Schreck- and Finsteraarhorn. They reported that, just as they arrived on the glacier-pass, they saw, through a telescope, people who can have been none other than the other brother [Gottlieb] with two Valaisans, planting a flag on the Jungfrau. They had been on the same mountain ('Eisgebirge') a fortnight ago [this is

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<sup>34</sup> See *Gemeinnützige schweizerische Nachrichten*, Numbers 143, September 7; 146, September 12; 151, September 22, 1812. As these notices have some historical interest and are scarcely known to Alpine students, I translate them.

of course a reporter's error], and also on the Finsteraarhorn. Early this morning they left for Meiringen. Their journey here was not intentional, as on the Finsteraarhorn glacier they left some clothes; but coming unexpectedly on the highest point [of the pass], and not daring to redescend, they continued their way to Grindelwald. So they gained the well-deserved honour of making a passage perhaps never tried by any mortal, and of exploring for the first time an entirely untrodden region. We hope that they will soon describe their travels in the newspapers. . . . The two Oberhasli guides [Abbühl and Huber] who, a fortnight ago, were with these gentlemen on the summit of the Jungfrau [this is a misstatement either of the guides or of the reporter, as they had never ascended the Jungfrau], told us that the ascent is easy and without danger. But to climb the Finsteraarhorn is, so they say, a very risky undertaking. In the descent, they feared to succumb and to be unable to stir (*'zu erwinden und nicht mehr von der Stelle kommen zu können'*). For six weeks these courageous mountaineers were on the watch in our savage icefields for a favourable moment. Herr Meyer considers that it is also possible to climb the Great Eiger [probably the Mönch is meant], but this is disputed by the Grindelwalders. On the other hand, they [the Grindelwalders (?)] think it would be more possible to reach the summit of the Wetterhorn, as one had been already at the foot of the supreme ice top."

In No. 146 of the same paper (Sept. 12, 1812) appears the following: 'We should mention that J. Rud. Meyer, jun., mentioned in No. 143, is a grandson of the worthy patriarch J. Rud. Meyer, and son of Herr J. R. Meyer, who, with his brother, planned and carried out, from Fiesch in the Valais, the expedition to the highest summits. This young man, who comes fresh from the University as a Doctor of Medicine, has been known from his youth as a thorough climber. At Berne he interested everybody by the modesty and truth of his accounts and by the open and unpretending narrative of his observations and dangerous travels.'

It is obvious that Höpfner was anxious to make amends for some of his criticism of 1811.

In No. 151 of the same paper (Sept. 22, 1812), the correspondent writes from Grindelwald, dated Sept. 18: 'The day before yesterday, the bailiff of Interlaken, his son and I, with the loveliest cloudless sky, were on the highest point of the Itramen-alp [Tschuggen, 2523 m.]—this being the best station to observe the Jungfrau. We saw very distinctly through our

telescopes the flag planted on the actual and highest summit (*eigentlichen und höchsten Spitze*) of the Jungfrau. It leaned already a little toward the right side; the black cloth waved around the staff was clearly visible and seemed (probably by an optical illusion, since everything seen against the sky-line seems tenfold greater) to be much higher and bigger than it really is or can be. Thus it is established, certain and without a doubt, that the Jungfrau and its actual highest point has been ascended this year. We three are perhaps the first to see this flag from here,' etc.

As late as 1842, Gottlieb Studer<sup>35</sup> was told by a trustworthy man that he had seen from Unterseen the Meyers' flag flying on the top of the Jungfrau in 1812. So all doubts about the Jungfrau had vanished.

This was not the case with the Finsteraarhorn. On August 2, 1815, Professor Wyss inquired for Abbühl at the Grimsel, to accompany him for a walk on the Aar glaciers; but he was away with strangers. Wyss was anxious to inquire for details of the ascent of the Finsteraarhorn 'which is still obstinately doubted by many.'<sup>36</sup>

Pfarrer J. Schweizer, who visited Abbühl at Imboden, September 13, 1821,<sup>37</sup> mentions 'the renowned mountaineer [Bergmann] who really climbed [*wirklich erstiegen hat*] the highest summit of the Finsteraarhorn and saw Meyer's flag flying on the Jungfrau.' The word *really* [*wirklich*] does not suggest any doubt, but distinguishes between Meyer's attempt and the actual ascent by his guides. The same author tells us some interesting facts about the two men. Aloys Volker, in the winter of 1814, met with a fatal accident between the Handegg and the Grimsel.<sup>38</sup> One of a large party, he had the misfortune to tread on a *Föhnschuld*, and was hurled into the gorge of the Aar, whence his old comrade, Abbühl, next day recovered his body.

At the end of the 1813 pamphlet, the Meyers announced their intention to make a third journey through the icy regions of Switzerland. They were not destined to do this. Johann Rudolf Meyer I. died in 1818. His son, Joh. Rudolf II., followed him to the grave in 1825, and his grandson, Gottlieb,

<sup>35</sup> *Topographische Mittheilungen aus dem Alpengebirge*, p. 131.

<sup>36</sup> *Reise in das Berner Oberland*, vol. ii. (Berne, 1817) p. 753.

<sup>37</sup> It was published only in the *Alpenrosen auf das Jahr 1827*, p. 319. See also *Deutsche Alpenzeitung*, vol. vii. (1907), p. 319.

<sup>38</sup> *Alpenrosen auf das Jahr 1827*, p. 352.

in 1829. About the same time Hieronymus Meyer migrated to Munich. The probable cause was the critical financial situation of the family, which no longer permitted the very expensive explorations that 'Father Meyer' had inaugurated, and one easily understands why Dr. R. Meyer, in 1881, declined Hugi's invitation to revisit his old 'hunting grounds.'

For sixteen years the peace around the Jungfrau and the Finsteraarhorn was not disturbed by any traveller. Then two pioneers, Caspar Rohrdorff and F. J. Hugi, appeared on the scene.

*(To be continued)*

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## IN MEMORIAM.

FREDERICK GARDINER,

1850-1919.

Few members of the Alpine Club can show such a long list of expeditions as Frederick Gardiner. Drawn irresistibly to the hills, he was never satisfied until he had climbed all the higher points, wherever he happened to be. No mere peak-bagger, but a mountaineer in the truest sense of the word, he loved the mountains, and liked above all to visit some remote part of the Alps. I think he took a greater interest in exploration than in actual climbing, and he remained true to this exploring instinct after reaching the age when others gravitate towards the more frequented parts of the Alps, attracted by hot baths, digestible food, and comfortable beds.

When a boy of eleven, he went up Snowdon from Beddgelert with his father; this was his first experience of hill-climbing.

Seven years later, he stood on the top of a Swiss mountain, the Rigi, and watched the sun rise over the Alps on a perfect summer morning—a sight he never forgot.

In 1869, he made his first ascent of a snow mountain, Monte Rosa, and wrote a very youthful and racy account of it, painting in lurid colours all the terrors and dangers he encountered, and describing how his face was so badly blistered that four or five ladies kindly lent him jars of rosewater.

In 1870, he made several expeditions, the most interesting of which was the ascent of the Matterhorn in company with Lucy Walker and her father. How much Gardiner owed to his lifelong friends and neighbours, the Walkers, it is difficult to say, but their influence was undoubtedly great. In 1874, we find him travelling with Walker, Moore, and Grove in the Caucasus. He always looked back on that tour with pride and liked to recall, how, on reaching the top of

Elbruz, the others said : ' Let the young one go first, it means more to him.'

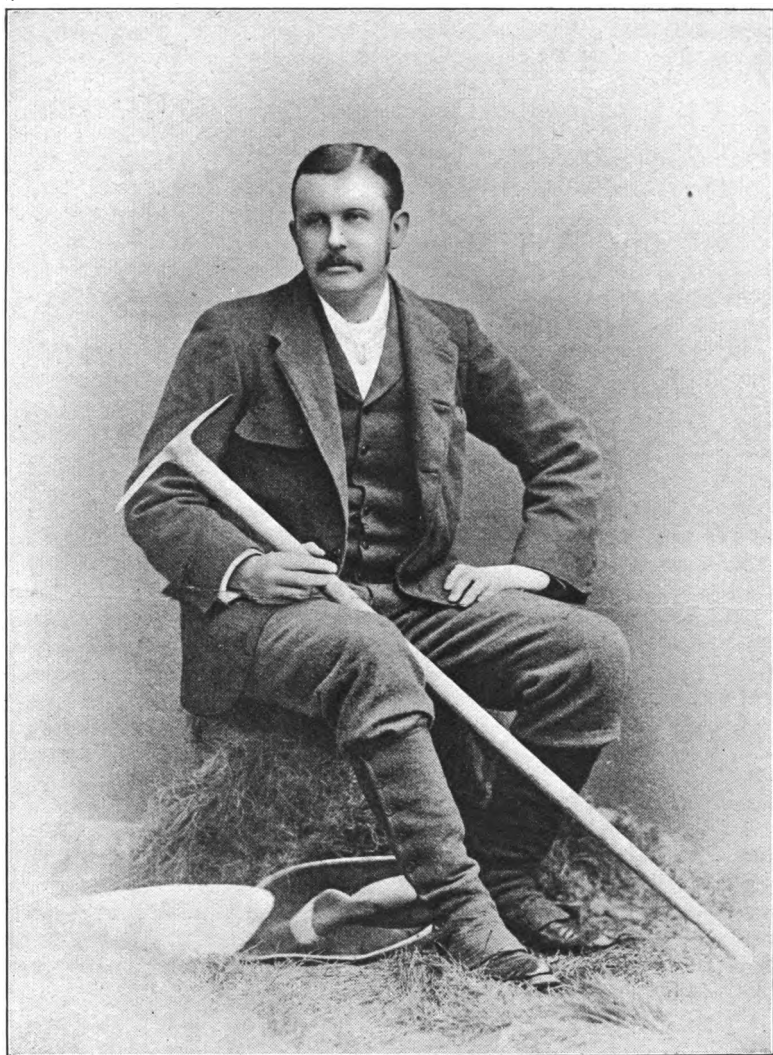
Gardiner was also exceptionally fortunate in having Peter Knubel with him during his first years of climbing. Under his guidance he became an expert in the craft, and acquired a wide experience of the varying conditions of ice and snow. Their expeditions were made in various parts of the Alps from Dauphiné to the Ortler ; beginning in 1870, they continued together yearly until 1878, when Fred Gardiner dispensed with guides. A notice of the most important of these expeditions will be found in our President's article in 'A.J.' xxxii. 94. This gives a very interesting account of Peter Knubel's Führerbücher, and states : ' Knubel recounts that, of all the climbers he has accompanied, Mr. Gardiner was unexcelled, and that his staying powers when they climbed together in the 'seventies were simply marvellous.'

When I first met Gardiner, in 1877, he was indeed a fine, upstanding fellow, well over six feet high, in the prime of manhood. He had a good tenor voice, with which he liked to awaken the mountain echoes ; the sound of his merry yodel still comes back to me with these early recollections. It is amusing to recall that, when my brother and I were photographed with him, the photographer persisted in calling him ' Le bel Anglais,' ' Le Lord Byron,' and treated him as the central figure, using us as mere accessories, even telling us what expression to put on to enhance the effect : we had indeed to deal faithfully with Frederick afterwards to restore the balance.

Various accounts of his expeditions with Knubel appeared in the JOURNAL. In ' Climbs round Zermatt and the Riffelalp in 1876 ' ('A.J.' vii.), it appears that he made the ascent of Monte Rosa, without guides, with Messrs. E. Gage and Bishop.

I need hardly say that Gardiner's experience and training were invaluable to us in 1878. His love of exploration, gift of organisation and previous experience of Dauphiné in 1873 led us to choose that district for our first essay in guideless climbing. The Société des Touristes du Dauphiné had already begun building refuges, but there was still a great lack of shelter. Hotels also were few and so primitive that it was necessary to lay in stocks of tinned meats, soups, and wines. Thoroughly in his element, Gardiner arranged everything admirably. His special weakness, leaving a bottle of champagne in the snow at the foot of a peak to await our return, received due consideration.

In the notice of my brother Charles, I have already mentioned Gardiner's chief climbs with us, especially the ascent of the Meije and the traverse of the Jungfrau from the Wengern Alp. After the ascent of the Meije, my brother was called back to England, and Gardiner and I went on climbing for another week. In it we succeeded in making three new expeditions—the Col Tuckett and the peaks Bonvoisin and Verdonne, and ascended three other peaks and crossed two more passes. It was a very hard seven days' work,



F. GARDINER



CANON MARTIN



CANON SLOMAN



all the more toilsome as there were only two of us to do it ; but we had no disputes of any kind either about sharing the work or what direction to take. Fred Gardiner was indeed one of the most good-natured men I ever met ; this quality, combined perhaps with his ability to speak French well, made him the special favourite of our two Dauphiné porters. These men came from Vallouise : one, Joseph Lagier, an old soldier ; the other, Simon Barnéoud, a shoemaker. They were more than faithful ; no trouble was too great for them to take in our service, they even went especially to pray for us when we were on a difficult expedition—I suspect they put in an extra prayer or two for Gardiner.

In 1880, he climbed with Coolidge and the Almers. He joined them again in 1885, and went with them each year, until 1893 ; after that, Coolidge dropped out, and Gardiner continued climbing with members of the Almer family every year until the War. When old Christian retired, Rudolph joined his brother, young Christian ; while later, Peter took the place of young Christian, and in 1910 we find Rudolph and his son accompanying him. He was very much attached to Rudolph and Peter, but most of all to Rudolph, who actually accompanied him twenty-four years in succession. During his thirty years' climbing with the Almers, a remarkable number of interesting expeditions was made and a great amount of exploration accomplished.

In looking through the careful notes which Gardiner kept of all his journeyings one is impressed with his methodical manner of tackling one district after another, visiting each valley, climbing all the higher peaks, and recording all the details of each expedition. The number of these expeditions alone is over twelve hundred, most of them above the snow-line. Accounts of many have already appeared in the JOURNAL, but many interesting climbs must necessarily remain unmentioned. In looking through the numerous volumes of his diary, I was astonished to find that when he was fifty he went up the Jungfrau with his son George, in four hours and a quarter from the Rotthal, descended to the Mönchjoch in two hours, and 'then raced down' ! George had already done enough to qualify for the Alpine Club when illness and early death cut short a promising career.

When Gardiner visited India in 1913 his climbing days were nearly over, and he contented himself with a view of the Himalayas from Darjeeling and the sight of Everest at sunrise from Tiger Hill.

He was married in 1881 to Alice, daughter of Josiah Evans of Haydock—a very happy union. Love of the mountains brought them together and love of the mountains remained with them to the end. Together they visited many districts and shared many good climbs : in the Oberland alone they ascended the Mönch and Jungfrau, and crossed the Wetterhorn once in summer and once in winter. That winter ascent left vivid impressions of extreme beauty, both from the summit and from the Dossen hut at nightfall. The

younger members of their family often joined in the later expeditions.

During his long Alpine career, Gardiner made many climbing friends—most of his friends indeed were members of the Alpine Club. He was elected a member in 1879 and a Vice-president in 1896. The Editorship of the JOURNAL was also offered to him, but this he declined, as he did not feel equal to the task.

The later years of his life were troubled with rheumatic gout. The worries and anxieties of the War also did much to break down his health. He lived, however, to see the dawn of peace and to rejoice in the safe home-coming of his sons.

Such a long and remarkable climbing career deserves a fuller appreciation than this, and it is a matter of regret to me that the notice was not written by one whose knowledge of the Alps is wider than mine; but I climbed with him in what he liked to call the golden age of our youth, and I can at least bear witness that he was one of the best of comrades.

LAWRENCE PILKINGTON.

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### JOHN HERBERT WICKS.

IN the early hours of Thursday, July 31, 1919, John Herbert Wicks passed away at the age of sixty-seven.

During the War he had, like so many others, been greatly overworked, and he had lived in comparative seclusion. But after the Armistice things changed. His old hospitality was renewed, and he saw more of many of his friends.

On July 24, Wills and I were staying at Queen's Gate, and Bradby came to dinner. The old climbing party of the last ten or twelve years was gathered together for the first time since 1914, and seldom have we spent a happier evening. Not one of us dreamed that this was to be our last meeting. Not one of us thought that the call which must come to us all would first come to Wicks. We hoped that many happy years were yet in store for him, and though we knew that an affection of the heart, not serious enough to interfere with less strenuous avocations, would debar him from doing any serious mountaineering again, we yet expected to see him on the snows next year.

The Fates ordained it otherwise. Within a week he had passed. But he kept at work and at play until a few days before the end, and the end came easily. Though our loss is irreparable, these are things to be thankful for. Nor was there any 'sadness of farewell.'

J. H. Wicks came of an old Gloucestershire family, but he was born in London, educated largely in London, and remained essentially a Londoner all his life. He entered his uncle's firm (Jacob Walter & Co., Brazilian merchants) as a youth, and

became the senior partner many years before his death. His interest in its activities was profound, and his grasp of figures and detail appeared to be instinctive. His work brought him into intimate relationship with many leading men in leading industries, in City circles, and in Government offices in this country, and with political, administrative, and business men of prominence in Brazil. He spoke Portuguese fluently, and he knew Rio as well as he knew London.

But it is not with this aspect of his career that this memoir has to do. His youthful vigour was intense, and found outlet in football, hockey, rowing, walking, and mountaineering. This last was destined soon to outshadow all the rest, to divide with his business activities the chief interest of his life, and to prove a twin source of his friendships and affections. He never married, but had many friends, and a circle of deeply attached intimates who were always sure of a warm welcome at Queen's Gate, and at his cottage near Goring.

A man of few words and singular silence, he had, at the back of a somewhat austere bearing, the heart of a child, while his practical thoroughness and downrightness were relieved by a whimsical sense of humour, which, though only occasionally discovering itself spontaneously, was readily evoked.

Wicks joined the Alpine Club in 1885, and soon became a prominent member, a position which he retained until the end. No face was better known at the meetings, and he served the Club well and faithfully in many capacities. He was Honorary Secretary (1893-96) during those strenuous years when much extra work was demanded and ungrudgingly given by the search for new premises, and the eventual removal of the Club in 1895 from its first home in St. Martin's Place to its present abode at the head of Savile Row. Before that he had served on the Committee, and since he has sat at various times as 'Extra Member' and as Vice-President (1904).

Though he contributed but one paper to the *ALPINE JOURNAL*,<sup>1</sup> his sound criticism and wide knowledge were ever at the service of all who might want them, and he helped materially with the new edition of Ball's 'Alpine Guide,' and with the Kurz Guide to the Chamonix district, an area with which he had an exceptionally thorough and intimate acquaintance.

Wicks's climbing career began in the mid-seventies in the Lakes and in Wales; and until well on in the present century he returned to these old haunts, varied by visits to Glencoe, Ben Nevis, or Skye each winter.

I have found some difficulty in tracing the date of his first visit to the Alps. It was probably in 1880, but it may have been in 1879, and the first certain date I have is 1881. Anyway his qualification,

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<sup>1</sup> 'Two Peaks and a Centre,' *A.J.* xv. 333.

when he came up for election was for those days a very exceptional one. Over fifty expeditions are recorded and they include an unusually large number of passes in the Pennine Alps, a few peaks in the Oberland, and a few in the Chamonix area. An ascent of 'Mont Blanc from Courmayeur,' is mentioned, and most of the chief summits around Zermatt and Saas. The Dent Blanche and two traverses of the Matterhorn are included, and a new route was made up the Tête du Lion from the Stockje.

During these years and the four which followed, he climbed with a number of different guides. Theodor and Adolf Andermatten were I believe his regular guides in the earlier years. Gabriel Taugwalder and Ambros Supersaxo were also with him a good deal. One year he was with Alphonse Payot, and he made odd climbs with both Alfred and François Simond. For two years Emile Rey was his leading guide, and in one of these Johann Fischer was the second. William Muir was his companion during most of this period, but was replaced in 1889 by H. W. Henderson.

But it is as a guideless climber that Wicks was best known, and will be most remembered, and he formed the central figure of a party which, ending its activities with the outbreak of the War, had made twenty-five Alpine campaigns. Of these C. H. Pasteur joined in one, J. H. Gibson in two, Ellis Carr in two, G. H. Morse in four, T. L. Kesteven in five, W. A. Wills in six, and E. H. F. Bradby in eighteen, while Wicks and I each took part in twenty-two.

During these years some 250 expeditions were made, and Wicks shared in about 220. They included a good many unsuccessful attempts on rather difficult rock peaks, like the Requin, which was attacked several times in its virgin days, the Petit Dru, and the Ago di Sciora. Unsuccessful expeditions there were too upon the snows, from the weather, as on the Lyskamm, and from bad snow, as in the Couloir of the Verte. But as a general rule the expeditions were successful and included peaks and passes—small and great—in almost every district of the Alps: Cottians, Dauphiné, Tarantaise, Graians, Mont Blanc, Pennines, Oberland, Bernina, Bregaglia, Brenta, Ortler, and Dolomites.

It may be interesting to recount how this enterprise initiated. It was thus, and, like so many human undertakings, largely accidental in its inception. At the end of July 1889, many climbers were gathered at the Montanvers. Wicks and Henderson were nearing the end of their engagement with their guides, while Morse had just parted with his. I was there, too, with my wife, but though I had joined in an expedition now and then, I was not out for serious mountaineering that year. All four of us had been on the mountains together both at Wastdale and in the Alps, and all had had some ten years or so of experience with good guides. The weather was fine, and we all had a few more days of holiday in front of us.

On August 2, it occurred to Wicks and Henderson to give Morse and me a pleasant surprise, and they invited us to go up the Grand

Dru with them next day. We were to go on two ropes, one guide leading each. At lunch time the guides were informed of the project, and the afternoon was spent in preparation, but before dinner a hitch was in evidence. The guides had much confabulated and had come to their employers and said that they declined to go unless two more guides were engaged. This was just the kind of contingency which was sure to show the stuff that Wicks was made of. He said little to the guides, but told them to give him the rope and the sacks, and that we would make a 'promenade' alone. Then he came to us and recounted what had happened, adding, 'there is only one thing to be done—we must go up the Dru without them.' A council ensued in which I was perhaps the wet blanket. The Dru, without sleeping at a gîte, was very long, and I was only in very moderate training. I might be too slow for the job, and there was a possibility that we might fail from this or other causes. It would be a mistake to risk failure: Why not try the Charmoz? It was much shorter, and Wicks at any rate knew the route, for he had been up with Muir and Emile Rey, and had made the first ascent of 'the curious pinnacle, most irreverently known as Wicks's Stick.'\*

And so it was settled. We started at two, and reached the top at 10.30. Alfred Simond, who was in our secret, was looking out for us, and flashed sunshine into our eyes with a large mirror which he had brought out, and placed beside the telescope, thus assuring us that we were not unobserved. Thus we made what was, for all of us, our first serious guideless climb in the Alps, and what was also, I believe, the first guideless ascent of the Charmoz. We had found the thing well within our capacities, and had tasted a new and keener flavour than any of which we had had previous experience.

Next year Wicks, Morse, and Carr had a successful guideless season in the same district, and I joined them in an odd expedition. In 1891, C. H. Pasteur took Carr's place for the first half of the holiday, when they ascended the Meije and traversed the Ecrins, while Gibson replaced him later on at the Montanvers, where again I joined them once. In 1892, Gibson was once more the third man, and in 1893 I joined the party for the first time as a regular member, when we had a very successful season in the Graians and at Courmayeur. From thence onwards, until the war broke out, there was no break, though there were three seasons—1899, 1901, and 1907—when Wicks was unable to come out at the same time as the rest.

Most of the expeditions were entirely guideless, but a guide or porter was often employed as far as the roping place, and occasionally the whole way as a carrier. Occasionally, too, we persuaded an old friend, like Emile Rey, Ulrich Almer, or Alfred

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\* Mummery—*My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus*, p. 118.

Simond, whom we were lucky enough to find free, to accompany us on an expedition.

In twenty-two out of the twenty-five campaigns, Wicks was, as already stated, a member of the party, and certainly in three out of every four of the expeditions the party was purely amateur. He did his share of carrying, step-cutting, and leading. It was our custom to take turns, and speaking roughly he led one expedition out of three. But he was a true sportsman, and cared not what position on the rope he occupied. He was equally good everywhere, was always safe, and instinctively did the right thing in emergency.

It is not necessary to give a complete list of Wicks's expeditions during these years, but a selection must be made if this memoir is to convey any idea of his Alpine career. Space forbids details, and lists of climbs never make very interesting reading. A chronological or topographical record would be the simplest method to adopt, but perhaps a somewhat less monotonous one will be to divide the expeditions into types, and cite examples, chosen either on account of the interest of the climbs themselves, or as indicating the various districts visited.

Of the few new ascents by far the most important was that of the Pic Sans Nom on the Dru-Verte Ridge, made by Wicks, Morse, and Carr in 1890, and well described by Wicks in the paper already referred to. This somewhat insignificant-looking peak is of equal height with the Dru, and its summit is at least equally difficult of attainment. The fact that they succeeded in conquering a peak which had twice baffled Ulrich and Hans Almer is a signal tribute to their mountaineering capacities. The Evêque, on the Verte-Moine Ridge, with Mont Rouge de Gruetta and Mont Rouge de Peuteret, complete the little list of virgin peaks.

Of new routes there were a good many, and several minor ones are omitted from the list which follows. Charforon (E. arête); Aiguille de la Brenva (traverse N. to S.); Aiguille de Talèfre (W. arête); Aiguille de Triolet (S. arête); Aiguille d'Argentière (S.E. arête); Mont Collon (N.W. arête? second ascent); Jumeaux de Val Tournanche (E. Face. The ascent of this rock wall took 9½ hrs. not including halts); Aletschhorn (S.E. arête); Schreckhorn (S.W. arête—descent by ordinary route = up and down in a day from Grindelwald); Corno Bianco (E. Face and N. arête); Ferro Occidentale (S. arête). A rather striking variation on the Cima del Largo perhaps deserves mention, and one may add the great S. Face of the Dent du Requin, with Alfred Simond leading, but by a route which had been discovered by us on a previous exploring expedition. This was one of the longest and best rock climbs we have done, and, going up and down the same way, we were on the rocks (including two hours on the top) from 5 A.M. to 7 P.M. On another new climb, Ulrich Almer led us up the W. Face of the Wetterhorn, after attempting and failing on the unclimbed S.W. arête.

Most of the foregoing climbs were traverses, and they add to the list of expeditions of this type. These include the Ecrins (S. to N.); the Grand Paradis (down by Col de l'Abeille); Mont Pourri (up by N. arête, down by W. arête); Levanna; Rutor; Bec de l'Invergnan; Herbetet (up by S. arête); Aiguille des Glaciers (up by S.E. arête, down by S. arête); Mont Blanc (1. up by Midi route), (2. up by Aiguille du Goûter), (3. summit omitted, up by Brenva route, down by Corridor)\*; Tour Ronde (from Courmayeur and back, up by Col du Géant, down by Brenva Glacier); Charmoz (N. to S. and S. to N.); Grépon; Mont Pleureur; Aiguilles Rouges d'Arolla; Aiguille de la Za; Dent des Bouquetins; Dent d'Hérens (up from Breuil, down to Valpelline); Matterhorn; Monte Rosa; Zermatt Breithorn (up by N. face); Klein Matterhorn (up from N.); Jungfrau (up from Roththal, down to Wengern Alp)\*; Piz Bacone; Piz Bernina (up by Scharte); Ortler (1. up by Hinterergrat), (2. up by Hochjoch); Königsspitze; Zebbru; Cevedale.

In looking through my notes of the climbs above alluded to, all sorts of intimate memories of Wicks and his ways have crowded back, and space may be found for one which was very characteristic of him, as a man of deeds, not words. We had climbed the Jungfrau from the Roththal hut and arrived upon the summit at 10.50. As we sat on the top, Bradby and I discussed which route we should descend by—the ordinary one by the Mönchjoch, or the more formidable one to the Scheidegg, for which we thought the hour was rather late. Wicks, half smoking and half sleeping, gave an occasional grunt but added nothing to the discussion. But when our half-hour was up, he suddenly rose, relit his pipe, and started at a trot towards the Silberlücke. And very finely did he lead us down by one of the grandest ice routes in the Alps. There was much step-cutting in hard ice above the Silberlücke bergschrund, and again in the Guggi ice-fall, but he got us unroped on the far edge of the Eiger Glacier just as dusk was melting into night.

That was a long day, for starting from the Roththal at 2.30 we did not reach Grindelwald till after midnight. But we were used to long days, and generally preferred one long one to two short ones. Consequently we very seldom slept in huts, and the bulk of the expeditions already referred to were made in a single day. That was indeed the rule, and the Trélatête from Courmayeur, the Dent Blanche from Arolla, Bietschhorn from Ried, the Roseg from Pontresina, and the Disgrazia from Masino are a few more good examples. But some of the longest days were on the passes, the longest of all being the Col de la Brenva (already mentioned under Mont Blanc) from Courmayeur to the Grands Mulets;

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\* Wicks had also been up by the Dôme route (?) or the Rochers (?)

\* Another good climb on the Jungfrau was an attempt on the E. arête.

while another delightful expedition, very easily made in a single day, was the passage of the Jungfrauoch and Mönchjoch, starting from the Wengern Alp about midnight, and returning there to dinner by the train from Grindelwald.

But it was as a rock climber that Wicks was perhaps best known, and on certain classes of rock, and notably on smooth slabs, he was exceptionally expert. And he had a very fine eye for a route both in general line and in detail. He was not the first to lead over the top of the great tower on the Dent Blanche—in lieu of the dangerous route round it which was followed by all the early guides—but he was, I think, undoubtedly the first to apply the same method to the somewhat similar tower on the S.E. arête of the Aiguille des Glaciers, which Alexander Burgener had skirted by letting himself down with a fixed rope into the icy couloir on the right. I was looking about for the remains of this rope, which was said still to be there, when, on looking up, I saw Wicks at the end of a long lead, well up on the face of the tower, which, though so formidable in appearance, proved to present no great difficulties.

To the good rock climbs already mentioned may be added the S. Aiguille d'Arves; the ascent of all the points on the Broglio Ridge; the Aiguille Noire de Peuteret (Rey leading); Jétoula; most of the peaks on the Val Tournanche Ridge; the Sciora di Fuori; the Badile; the twin peaks of the Sass Maor (Madonna by Winkler Kamin); the Pala di San Martino; the Cimone della Pala; and the Croda da Lago.

Of other peaks not yet referred to, one may select a few well-known ones. Monte Viso, Grande Casse, Grande Sassièrre, Grivola, Tour Noire, Grand Combin, and the Eiger, on which we tried to make a new route coming down, and got benighted—a mishap which occurred to us on one other occasion only.

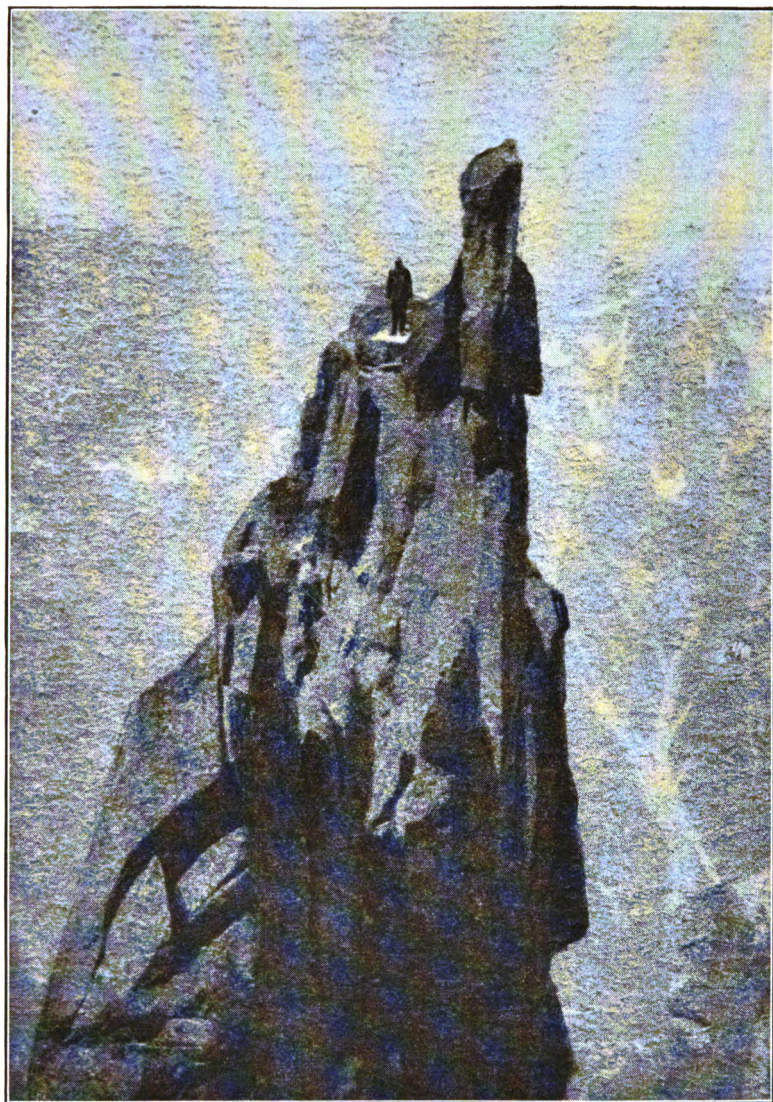
The minor climbs were more numerous than the great mountains, and often quite as full of interest, and the list of passes rivals that of the peaks. Many of our best expeditions were indeed on the passes, and a day on the Schmadrijoch, with an incompetent guide, engaged to make a third on the rope, was full of varied adventure, and proved one of the most exciting and exhausting of the whole series. Again, in no class of expedition was there more charm, more interest, and more call for snowcraft and guiding qualities, than on the many occasions when, in districts visited for the first time, a way had to be found over unknown glaciers into unknown valleys, often badly mapped, and often in foul or foggy weather.

Enough has perhaps been said of Wicks's doings, though I find that only about a third of his guideless climbs have been referred to, and not more than a tenth of those he made with guides. In the central Alps there were but few important peaks which he had not ascended. Many he had climbed more than once, and a good few several times.

If, before closing these imperfect notes, any attempt is to be



made to review Wicks's qualities as a mountaineer, one must, while recognising his qualities as a climber, as good on snow and



THE 'BÂTON WICKS' ON THE CHARMOZ.

ice as on the rocks, unhesitatingly accord the first place to his capacities as a guide. Much is implied in this; experience,  
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knowledge of mountain topography and snow conditions, sound judgment, correct action in emergency, and a 'guiding instinct.' It is difficult for those who were much with him to think of him otherwise than as a guide; and personally, when beset year by year by friends at home with the reiterated warning, 'I hope you never go without good guides,' I have answered, without any feeling of prevarication, that I never did, and that I had been with the same for many years.

Wicks found old routes and made new ones in almost every district of the Alps, in regions he had never visited before, and in all conditions of ice, snow, and weather; and if difficulties or dangers were encountered, he led his party safely out of them. What more can be said of any guide? He had done enough to earn a guide's diploma in a dozen different centres. From among the best guides he had learned the elements, and but for the knowledge thus acquired he could never have mastered the higher mysteries which the mountains alone can teach. His debt to the guides was great, and no one had more veneration for the qualities of character and skill displayed by the best of the guides than he had. Eventually he became almost as one of them, and no one recognized this more fully or more generously than the guides themselves. It was only by those of the first rank that he was excelled as a mountaineer, and even among these there are but few with whom I should feel 'safer' on any Alpine peak or pass, and in any weather, than with my dear old friend.

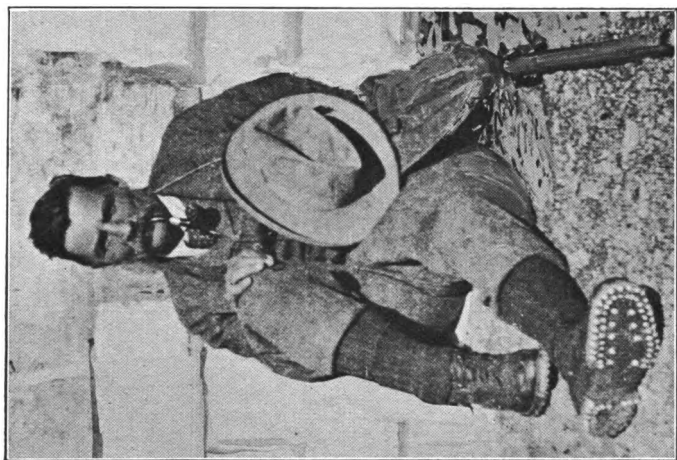
He has left us. No more will his axe ring upon the ice, nor his fingers grasp the crag. But his name will live among us and among the mountains; and it is fitting that it should live in a special way upon the Charmoz, as he loved it best of all. He had climbed this mountain five times (four guideless); he had traversed it in both directions; he had made it the scene of his first guideless expedition; and under its shadow he had spent his last day in the Alps (July 29, 1914). On the summit ridge of the Charmoz stands a giant monolith of the granite that Wicks loved. His name has become indelibly associated with it, and to the Savoyards it has come to be universally known as 'Le Bâton Wicks.' As such it is figured in Guido Rey's book<sup>5</sup> and as such it is referred to in other publications. Thus to generations which knew him not will his name be handed down, and will live among the glorious Aiguilles with which his Alpine career was so closely associated. Surely no mountaineer will again have so grand a monument, or one so nobly mounted.

C. WILSON.

[Wicks had not sat to a photographer for at least twenty to twenty-five years, and a thoroughly satisfactory portrait does not appear to exist.]

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<sup>5</sup> *Peaks and Precipices*, p. 71.

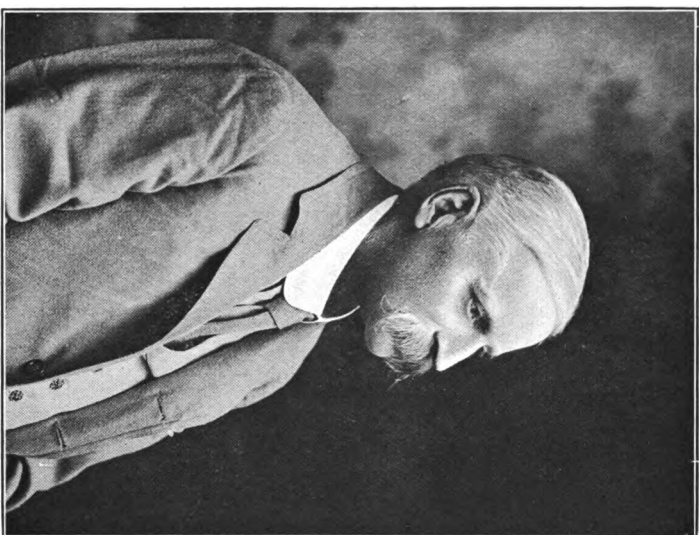


1906

J. H. WICKS  
(FROM SNAPSHOTS)



1913



CHARLES CANNAN



WALTER LARDEN

## CHARLES CANNAN

(1858-1919.)

IN Charles Cannan the Club has lost a distinguished member and a very staunch supporter. His keen interest in mountaineering and in everything that concerned the Club remained, to the end of his life, unabated by the fact that it was seldom possible for him to be present at our meetings. He served on the Committee from 1912 to 1914.

I made Cannan's acquaintance when I went up to Oxford in 1879, and the following summer we made up a reading-party to the Lakes with some other friends. How it came about I do not remember, but we settled ourselves at Ulpha in the Duddon Valley—a spot which possesses two enchanting bathing-places, but as a centre for seeing anything of the Lake Country has no merits whatever. All the party were working hard; but we allowed ourselves one holiday, and tramped over Mickledore to Wastdale Head. Cannan and I fell in love with the place at once, and returned there for the following Easter. I repeated my visit three or four times; but Cannan's parties at Wastdale went on for many years, and became an institution, of which more will be told later. Here I will only mention the curious fact that we never discovered the existence of the Napes Needle, and to this day I have never consciously set eyes on it except in a photograph.

Cannan's imagination was fired at once by the idea of mountaineering, and it was a settled thing that he should come with me to Switzerland after he had secured his First in 'Greats,' in the summer of 1881; he was an Alpine climber in spirit before he ever saw the Alps. My knowledge of Alpine literature in those days was confined to Whympers's 'Scrambles,' and 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers'; and I was obsessed with the idea of doing the High-Level Route, and of high-level routes generally. So our programme would not now be regarded as an ambitious one; but we crossed a large number of fine passes and saw a lot of country, and I don't suppose that I have ever had a more enjoyable trip. At an early stage of it occurred the Ulrich Lauener episode described in 'A.J.' xxx. 314. It closed with an attempt on the Aiguille de Blaitière, on August 5, which, owing to various untoward circumstances, fell short of success; but we consoled ourselves by watching Mummery engaged in his first attempt on the Grépon.<sup>1</sup>

I don't think Cannan missed a season for the next nine years. He was elected to the Club in 1885, with a goodly number of the great peaks of Zermatt and the Oberland to his credit. I was with him in 1884 and again in 1886, when we commenced operations by starting for the Balmhorn with a boy of fifteen belonging to the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mummery, *Climbs*, pp. 126-7.

Schwarenbach Inn. We reached the Klein Balmhorn successfully but a regular hurricane was blowing, and the boy was obviously scared at the idea of going further, so we decided to leave the true summit for another day (which never came). This was his only venture, so far as I am aware, in the way of guideless climbing. It was a bad year, and later our two most arduous and interesting expeditions ended in total or partial failure; but we retrieved our defeats to some extent in 1887.

After this, for some years, we did not climb together regularly; but our paths crossed from time to time at Saas Fee and Cogne, in Dauphiné and the Maderanerthal; and we joined forces in a few expeditions, among which I remember particularly an ascent of the Grosse Windgälle by a large party comprising Mrs. Cannan and two other ladies. We were rather under-guided, and had considerable difficulty in getting off the mountain. In 1899, I accompanied Cannan and his wife in a delightful trip through the Tarentaise, and in 1902 paid a short visit with him to the Tödi group, of which some account is given in 'A.J.' xxiii 450. I never was with him in the Alps again, but for many years afterwards we fought our battles over again during periodical week-end visits to his pleasant Oxford home. Mountaineering appealed to him in nearly all its aspects, and one feature of it, of which he had a specially lively appreciation, was the society of guides. He climbed with many guides at various times, and made friends of nearly all of them. I have before me a letter from him written last July, under the impression that I was about to start for Switzerland, in which he displays minute solicitude about the welfare of the two he knew best, J. J. Truffer and Moritz Inderbinen.

A. L. M.

I FIRST climbed with Cannan at Wasdale Head, in March 1888. We were in the Alps together afterwards; but Wasdale began it. Cannan and I were then examining in the Schools at Oxford, and the rest of the party consisted of two Trinity undergraduates, Messrs. A. E. W. Mason and Thornton. It was a kind of reading party, in fact; we worked all the morning and walked and climbed all the afternoon. It must not be supposed that climbing in the 'eighties—even the late 'eighties—meant scaling the face of Scafell and the arêtes of Great Gable; these justly popular expeditions had not then been placed before the public. Mr. Haskett Smith was reported to have performed wonderful feats, but it was not the ordinary man's business to imitate him—just yet. Even the easier and now more familiar of the 'first-class' ascents—such as the North Climb of the Pillar or Moss Gill, or the Pinnacle from Steep Gill—were not generally known. The Matterhorn of the district was the Pinnacle by the short way from the top of Scafell. Primarily, we were out to climb ice- and snow-filled gullies: to get as near



to Alpine conditions as possible. That was a game after Cannan's heart. He was an active climber on rocks ; but what he particularly liked was the Alpine mixture of rock and snow that was to be had at Wastdale Head in early spring—particularly that snowy spring of 1888, when you could glissade almost to the valley level, and the couloirs were choked with hard *névé*. Such a place as the Central Gully of Great End is a mere rough scramble in summer : in spring it may be an Expedition, when every pitch is an ice-slope, and you have to force your way through a cornice at the top. So we had great afternoons there and elsewhere—notably in Deep Gill, then a novelty ; for the climb straight up over the two pitches was first recorded in '86 ('A.J.' Nov. '86). I remember there was so much snow in '88 that we practically walked up the first pitch ; and the second being a mere mass of ice, Cannan cut his way straight up through the middle of it. All this was an excellent preparatory school for the Alps ; and it was Cannan who was the instructor. His companions, *N.B.*, were not always brought to Wastdale because they could climb, or even wanted to. Certainly most of them took to it ; but they were not often certificated experts ; and it was a great testimonial to Cannan's guiding that none of the young pupils whom he piloted in steep places ever came to grief, and nearly all wanted to go with him again. I was with him in three or four springs from '88 onwards. Among other companions of those days were Messrs. J. E. King and C. Cookson, and Dr. Collier. Afterwards, Wastdale Head began to be more like Zermatt, and the cheap Press published articles on 'The Brotherhood of Peril.' However, nothing could really spoil it—even though the old association of Row Head and Burnthwaite (are the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle still read at Burnthwaite ?) became only memories, and Cust's and the Central Gully gave place to more 'serious' expeditions, and, in short, much water flowed under the stick which made a bridge over T'Beck in floodtime. Cannan visited the valley again in 1913, 1914, and 1916, when he took his family there and they climbed some of the 'recognised' things—generally with Messrs. Field and Bowen. I was there with them in 1914.

The first year I went to the Alps with Cannan was 1889. We walked through the Kienthal (not then a popular resort) to Kandersteg, *en route* for Ried. Cannan refused to walk over the Lötchenpass, and said I must find something else. I found him the Märwiglücke in Tschudi ; and perhaps we went by that : I say perhaps, because I do not know (see 'A.J.' 'Alpine Notes,' Nov. 1889). Anyhow, we arrived at Ried, and went up the Bietschhorn. Thence we crossed the Beichgrat (small peak improbably alleged to be 'new,' *en route*) to Belalp, whence Cannan went on to Dauphiné with Mr. T. P. H. Jose and Joseph Truffer. I met him again in '91, at Zinal. We crossed the Triftjoch to Zermatt, and came back to Zinal (weather being bad for climbing) *via* the Jung and Meiden passes. There

was also a peak (new ?) at Zinal, Point 3176, near the Pigne de l'Allée. Thirteen years afterwards, I was at Stein with Cannan and Mrs. Cannan, in a partially constructed hotel ; luckily the weather was fine. He and I went up two or three small peaks there. Thence we moved to the top of the Simplon, and went up Monte Leone. In 1906, my wife and I joined the Cannans at the Montanvert, and I went up the Petits Charmoz with him, and the Aiguille du Tacul : in the same year, the Diablerets and Oldenhorn. The last climb I had in his company (in the Alps) was in 1911, a small and incomplete expedition from Belalp ; but from 1910 onwards he began to introduce his daughters to the mountains, and he and they did a great deal of climbing in 1910 (Stein and Göschenen), 1911 (Zermatt and Belalp), 1912 (Stein and Maderanerthal), 1913 (Arolla), July 1914 (Savoy). I find no record of any Tyrolese climb, except Cristallo in 1908.

Keenly interested in everything pertaining to the art and practice of mountain-climbing, quick to learn, and never in any sphere satisfied with anything short of a thorough mastery of the subject in hand, Cannan had made himself, when I first went with him, an extremely competent all-round mountaineer. Snow and ice-craft most interested him, from the variety of its problems and the opportunities given for skill based on knowledge and practice. Every ascent gave him experience, which he did not forget. Physically, he was very well equipped. Alpine climbing in the 'eighties and early 'nineties often meant very long walks—much longer than are nowadays necessary—and Cannan must have been in his younger days a very strong walker. I believe he ascended the Matterhorn from Zermatt direct, not from the Schwarzsee or the hut. But his great possession was knowledge. He went always with guides, liking their society and learning from them. But he could lead, as we knew at Wastdale Head. In the afore-mentioned passage of the Märwiglücke (?) he went first, by the expressed wish of the two Kandersteg guides who accompanied us ; and the route was known to none of the party.

Always and everywhere, whether in the Alps or away from them, Cannan had an abiding enthusiasm for mountaineering. It was not always shown in conventional ways. A deep sense of the seriousness of climbing as a temporary vocation found expression mostly in trenchant and sometimes damnatory phrases. But it was there. Many have the enthusiasm ; not many have Cannan's power of communicating it to others. It was one of his great characteristics that, whatever the business in hand, he could inspire collaborators with something of his own energy and his own method ; and you could not climb with him without being made to feel that you were doing something worth the best human effort. It was by virtue of that—by handing on the torch—that Cannan did notable service to mountaineering and the Alpine Club.

A. D. G.



## WALTER LARDEN (1855-1919).

WE have to record the death of this well-known climber on October 7, 1919, at a nursing home near Vevey. It was characteristic of Larden's strenuous, determined nature that he should obey a call to serve his country, regardless of his own comfort and interests. The call duly came and in spite of his advanced age of sixty-two he clad himself in khaki, associated with men of uncongenial tastes and habits, and lived a physically severe life under canvas on the East Coast for three months in 1918. There can be little doubt that this life of hardship, relieved by little that appealed to his refined, sensitive nature and high character, seriously undermined his health and strength, which for several years had been far from vigorous and sound.

There is no need here to recount in detail Larden's mountain exploits, which extended from 1880 until near the outbreak of the War. These are graphically and interestingly recorded in his two books, '*Recollections of an Old Mountaineer*'<sup>1</sup> and '*Argentine Plains and Andine Glaciers*.'<sup>2</sup> Since the outbreak of the War, Larden visited the Lake District and North Wales; and last summer, in broken health, he made an attempt to climb from Binn and Arolla. He actually succeeded in reaching the Geispad Pass, and the Bertol hut, and in gaining the Roussette, and the Pigne d'Arolla; but from the middle of August could do no more. Thereafter he gradually sank away and was unable to return to England, whither he was advised to go.

Arolla was one of Larden's favourite haunts, and his fame as a mountaineer early and deservedly spread in mountain circles, as a result of the '*Guide*' to the walks and climbs in the neighbourhood, which he drew up so carefully and exhaustively at the Hôtel Mont Colon. Every expedition, route, and variation, narrated in the visitors' book, as well as obtained from other sources and from his own experiences, were all described in orderly sequence and minute detail, and as a consequence his name became one of renown to many a lover of Alpine snows.<sup>3</sup>

The thought, care and thoroughness which Larden threw into this work were characteristic of him in each of his pursuits. When climbing he went about the business with critical intelligence and dogged determination. But although persistent in accomplishing his end, he was by no means rashly inclined. Quite the contrary. He was ever alertly critical, cautious and judicious, as to what was

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Arnold, 41 and 43 Maddox Street, Bond Street, London. 1910.

<sup>2</sup> T. Fisher Unwin, Adelphi Terrace, London. 1911.

<sup>3</sup> This guide was published in book form in 1908 by S. Chick & Co., 48 Wells Street, Oxford Street, London.

feasible, and what had better not be attempted. He aimed, naturally, at big expeditions with guides, in preference to smaller ones without, and, to prove that his was no sheep-like following, he found pleasure in repeating such expeditions without guides, and thus cultivated the self-reliant instinct which was so markedly developed in him.

That Larden profoundly enjoyed mountaineering and ungrudgingly devoted a considerable proportion of his somewhat slender income to his holidays and guides, there can be no manner of doubt, but it was always very serious enjoyment. His appreciation of views, flowers, and sunshine, and, above all, of the pervading spirit of the mountains, was deep and intense, but he rarely gave expression to such feelings, even to his immediate companions. He seemed to subordinate them to a critical analysis of the topography of the scene, or to recollections of similar experiences.

Larden always regarded as his life's work the seventeen years he was Instructor at the Naval Engineering College at Devonport. Here, with characteristic self-abnegation, he devoted himself wholeheartedly to helping on the less intelligent among the cadets. The previous eight years, spent as Science Master at Cheltenham College, he considered unproductive and unsatisfactory as compared with the steady development of teaching which he was able to achieve, later on, at Devonport.

Next to his work and his Alpine exploits, his principal interest was in literature, especially poetry. He constantly read Shakespeare during his solitary meals, and was a great admirer of Tennyson. He taught himself French, Spanish, and German, and became so well versed in classical 'Middle High German' as to be almost an authority on the subject. In art he had a correct and discriminating taste; in music he had a good idea of counterpoint, and as a young man had a fine baritone voice, which, however, he completely ruined by overstrain in teaching. He found consolation in whistling airs of old English and German folk-songs to the accompaniment of a guitar, which he played with considerable skill.

Photography was a comparatively recently acquired pursuit, and, as with everything else, he gave it intent attention, and mastered the art very successfully. His unique conception of collecting, tabulating, and photographing the inscriptions on chalets, which culminated in his book on the subject,<sup>4</sup> took form and was largely carried out during one or more of his, latterly, periodic nervous breakdowns. He must ever be doing or planning something, even when physically unfit and weary and unable to follow his more active occupations.

Rifle shooting he likewise took up in middle life on the principle

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<sup>4</sup>*Transcriptions from Swiss Chalets*, by Walter Larden, M.A. 1913. Horace Hart. University Press, Oxford.

that every citizen should be able to serve his country, and the War found him, not only an efficient instructor of younger men, but the most expert marksman of his corps and district. His favourite exercise (in England) was rowing, and in Plymouth Sound he used to amaze the crews of the warships by sculling down the harbour, and outside the breakwater, in a light outriggered river-skiff in distinctly rough weather. Yet here again he always exercised that extreme care and caution, combined with progressive perseverance, which enabled him to do apparently the most daring things without incurring (for him) undue risks.

The most outstanding feature of his character was the consistent and unselfish devotion to duty, which he carried into every branch of his activities. Handicapped by chronic ill-health, and pathetically conscious of his lone circumstances, his high courage, his affection for small children, his unreserved and confiding nature, and his animated conversational powers, won him the warm friendship of a modest circle which was only restricted by his instinctively retiring nature. Among these, and especially among those of the Alpine Club, his loss will be keenly felt, and his memory affectionately cherished.

LEGH S. POWELL.

HENRY W. KITCHING.

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CANON ARTHUR SLOMAN.

(1851-1919.)

CANON SLOMAN attended the Winter Dinner, apparently in good health, and was the object of some very sympathetic remarks by his former pupil, the Lord Chancellor. A few days later he passed quietly away.

Mr. C. E. Freeman writes to the Rev. Canon J. E. Dawson :—

‘My knowledge is limited to his early years, 1877-1882. Circumstances prevented us from going together in 1883, and he married in 1884.

‘He did a good deal at Cortina in 1883. In later years he was often at Arolla. I used to hear from him about his doings, but I have no record. He climbed most things there, Mt. Collon, the Za, the Pigne, &c.

‘I will give a short account of the climbs in which I was his companion.

‘1877. We went to Switzerland without any idea of climbing, but at the end of August were bitten with the idea, and determined to do something before we returned. When I asked him what it was to be, he replied that as Monte Rosa was the highest available peak, we had better go for that. We got up, a fact

probably owing to the enthusiasm of a first attempt, for the weather was atrocious, and the three other parties from the Riffl turned back. We floundered down, up to our waists in snow.

- ' 1878. Walked to Chamonix, crossed the Cols du Géant and de Valpelline, and went up Gabelhorn and Rothhorn.
- ' 1879. We only had ten days. We crossed the Trift to Zermatt, did the Strahlhorn, crossed the Théodule to Breuil, and thence next day came over the Matterhorn, not going to the Italian hut, but sleeping on our descent at the old hut on the Zermatt side. As we left next morning, we met Moseley and his party. [Moseley was killed a few hours later. Had Canon Sloman's party visited the Italian hut, they would have found there the guide Brantschen, who had been left there, ill, by his party, and died before succour reached him. An Italian party, of which Daniel Maquignaz was a member, it being his first ascent of the Cervin, found Brantschen dead on the floor of the cabane.] An attempt on Weisshorn defeated by weather.
- ' 1880. At Grindelwald. Wetterhorn, Eiger, Mönch, Jungfrau.
- ' 1881. Crossed the Moming and the Alphubel Joch. We had bad luck.
- ' 1882. Finsteraarhorn and Jungfrau from Concordia, Nadelhorn from Saas Fee. The Mischabeljoch to Zermatt, Dom and Weisshorn.

' This is the whole of the record. It cannot be called adventurous, but it brings back to me memories that are among the most delightful that I have, partly, I suppose, because I was then young, partly, and especially, because Arthur Sloman was a perfect companion, always considerate and unselfish, eager for success and full of enthusiasm, but wholly undisturbed by annoyances and disappointments.'

Mr. Solly writes :—

' I first met Canon Sloman about 1885. He seconded me for the Club just thirty years ago, and during that time I have had no more valued friend. After 1885 he stopped serious climbing for about twenty years, mainly, I understand, from family reasons, but he then resumed, and almost every year until 1914 made a number of expeditions, principally from Arolla or Saas, and he was able to find a few new climbs even in those districts, such as the traverse of the Vuibez Rocks' ('A.J.' xxv. p. 742, and see the 'Record of Expeditions in 1911' in 'A.J.' xxvi.). 'I did several climbs with him in 1907 and 1908, including an ascent of Mt. Collon and traverse of the Sonnhorn, and the Petite Dent de Veisivi, and he showed that he could still climb as well as many younger men, and that his love of the mountains had deepened rather than decreased with the lapse of years.

‘He was more than a mere mountaineer—a fine scholar and conscientious parish clergyman.’

In 1908 Canon Sloman ascended the Weissmies with his son and his old and respected guide, Ambros Supersax.

In 1910 he visited the Oetzthal.

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### HENRY MARTIN.

On Sunday, July 27, at Vevey, on the Lake of Geneva, died Henry Martin. An ardent lover of the mountains, a safe climber, a delightful companion, a true friend.

The writer met him for the first time at the Riffelalp in 1898, and since that time, for the next ten years or so, made with him and E. A. Aldridge many expeditions and climbs in Switzerland, Italy, the Dolomites, and spent an Easter at Wastdale Head.

Martin began serious climbing comparatively late in life, and was 52 years of age when he became a Member of the Club. Before that time he had done a good deal of walking over passes in Switzerland and Italy with the late Canon Beaumont and Mr. F. Ball.

When nearer 60 than 50 he did such climbs as the Weisshorn, the traverse of the Rothhorn, the Aiguille de la Za by the steep west face.

Memory recalls many delightful holidays spent together with him and Aldridge. Martin, I think, always arranged the plan of campaign, and no man could do so better.

He often spent part of his holidays at Belalp, and I think always a part at the Riffelalp, when, in latter times, and not up to severe expeditions, he delighted to organise and lead parties through the ice-falls of the Gorner and Findelen glaciers and up the Riffelhorn.

He was a most genial companion, always unruffled, cheery, good-tempered, whatever befell; he will be greatly missed by a large circle of friends.

Canon Martin was born in 1844. He was educated at the Merchant Taylors' School and St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, where he graduated with honours in Theology in 1872.

His great life's work was as Principal of Winchester Diocesan Training College, which post he held for 34 years.

Canon Martin's personality endeared him to the hearts of his staff and students alike, and engendered an *esprit de corps* which was not the least glory of the institution.

It has been well said that Canon Martin's success in his work lay chiefly in his strength of character and his tact, and under his guidance the Winchester Diocesan Training College held a distinguished place in the educational world.

He was a man of many interests and activities—for some years a Governor of the Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Hon.

Treasurer of Connaught House, Member of the Winchester Deanery Committee of the Diocesan Conference, Chairman of the Winchester Branch of the R.S.P.C.A., Director of the Hampshire and General Friendly Society, Member of the Winchester Diocesan Board of Education, Member of the Executive Committee of the S.P.G.

He took the greatest interest in the Training College Company of the old Volunteers, subsequently the Territorial Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment. He rose to the rank of Hon. Lt.-Colonel of the 1st V. B. Hampshire Regiment, and retired with the Volunteer Decoration.

Canon Martin was twice married, and he leaves a widow and two children by his second marriage.

Latterly he had to relax his activities owing to a weakness of the heart. The end came very suddenly, and I think as he would have wished.

He had left England, with Mrs. Martin and their two children, for Switzerland, arriving at Vevey on July 20. ~~Just a week~~ later (on Sunday, July 27), he went with Mrs. Martin to the 8 o'clock service at the English Church, and there in church, during the service, he passed away.

G. W. LLOYD.

### THE ALPINE CLUB LIBRARY.

The following works have been added to the Library :

#### *Club Publications.*

- Akadem. Alpenclub Freiburg, Switzerland, 1913.** Statuten. 1919  
 $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ : pp. 4.
- Akad. Alpen-Club Zürich.** XXIII. Jahresbericht, 1918. 1919  
 $9 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ : pp. 30: 77: 18: portraits, maps, ill.  
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- Slip for recording ascent. 1919

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New Expeditions, vol. 36. *G. A. De Petro*, La Bessanese Cresta Rey: *Abbate Henry*, Rocher de la Division, Rocher Silvano, Fenêtre du Mt Percé.

Vol. 37. *S. Noci*, Torre d. Gran S. Pietro: *Abbate Henry*, Gendarme de Chermontane, Becca Bovard, Tête de Chavacour, Becca des Crottes: *F. Berthelet*, Pta Gastaldi parete orientale: *G. A. De Petro*, Corno meridionale: *P. Viglino*, Blanc Giuir.

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$9 \times 6$ : pp. 120: plates.

Articles:—*V. A. Fynn*, Around Lake Louise in 1918: *H. E. Bulyea*,

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A trip to Mount Robson : *R. Douglas*, Notes on mountain nomenclature : *H. B. Sanson*, Snow in the Rocky Mountains Park : *W. Spreadborough*, Animals and birds of the Canadian Rockies : *R. M.*, Mammals of Jasper Park.

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Among the articles are :—

No. 7. *H. P. Cain*, Buttermere climbs : *J. R. Thackrah*, Pyrenees : *S. W. Herford*, Vajolet Towers : *J. Laycock*, Doe Crag : *G. F. Woodhouse*, New Climbs—Napes, Eel Crag Gully : *W. F. Ascroft*, Wellenkuppe : Climbs old and new.

No. 8. *W. P. Haskett-Smith*, First ascent of Napes Needle : *G. S. Sanson*, Scafell Central Buttress : *H. B. Lyon*, Gillercombe Buttress : *R. Mayson*, Troutdale Pinnacle, Borrowdale.

No. 9. *A. E. Field*, Tour in the Dolomites : *J. J. Brigg*, Alps of France : *H. Raeburn*, The Caucasus : *W. Weston*, Two climbs in the Japanese Alps : *J. E. Marr*, Up Church Beck, Conistoun.

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No. 11. *R. E. W. Pritchard*, Wastdale Head climbs : *J. W. Robinson*, Amongst the crags in 1885 : *B. Martin*, New climbs on Dow Crags : In memoriam, *H. L. Slingsby*.

No. 12. *G. D. Abraham*, Recollections of E. Whymper : *W. P. Haskett-Smith*, Pyrenean personalities, *M. Byles*, *C. Packe* : *G. S. Bower*, Easter on Lliwedd : Climbs new and old.

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Contains : *O. Frohnmeyer*, Kreuz u. quer durch Nordgraubünden :



- F. Bühler-Rist*, Traversierung des Grosslitzner-Grosses Seehorn : *H. Müller*, Aus d. Urner Alpen : *O. Gurtner*, Die Gspaltenhorngruppe : *J. Bernet*, Le Ginanzthal : *W. Mittelholzer*, Ein Flug, ü. d. Berner u. Walliser Alpen : *H. Correvon*, La Vallée de Poschiavo : *A. Heim*, Das Gewicht der Berge : *P. L. Mercanton*, Les variations périodiques des glaciers d. Alpes suisses : *A. Ludwig*, Ueber Talbildung in d. Alpen u. im Vorlande : *Thomas*, L'enquête sur le mal de montagne : *K. Gabriel*, Beiträge z. Graubündnerführer.
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- Ski.** Jahrbuch des Schweiz. Ski-Verbandes. XIV. Jahrgang. Bern, 1919  
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*R. Billwiller*, VI. Bericht der Gletscherkommission d. Physik. Ges. Zürich : *M. Kurz*, Wie liest der alpine Skiläufer seine Karte ? *C. J. Luther*, Schweiz. Schneemaler : *Hans Beatus Wieland* : *F. Brun*, Skitouren im Bedrettot : *A. Lunn*, Frühlings- und Sommerskifahrten : *W. Waller*, Ostertouren im Kaiserstockgebiet.
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- Enock, C. Reginald.** The great Pacific Coast. Twelve thousand miles in the golden west, being an account of life and travel in the western States

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- Ferrand, H.** L'alpinismo. In *La Sorgente*, Riv. mensile, Milano, anno 3, ni. 4-5. 15 aprile, 15 maggio 1919  
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- Among the articles are the following:  
 October. F. K. Ward, Possible prolongation of the Himalayan axis beyond the Dihang.  
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- v. Grabmayr, Karl.** *Hsg. v. Süd-Tirol Land und Leute vom Brenner bis zur Alurener Klause.* Berlin etc., Ullstein, 1919  
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- Articles by various writers who were against the northern portion of Italia irredenta having been given to Italy.
- Harshberger, John W.** Alpine fell-fields of eastern North America. In *Geogr. Rev.* New York, vol. 7, no. 4. April 1919  
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- A fell-field is a rocky flat on the alpine summits of mountains.
- Jaccotet, G., etc.** *Au Soleil et sur les Monts. L'étape libératrice: Scènes de la vie des soldats alliés internés en Suisse.* Genève, Sadag, 1918  
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- Jeffers, Le Roy.** Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada. In *Scribner's Mag.* New York, vol. 65, no. 6. June 1919  
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- Kindly presented by the Author.
- *Mountaineering in the great Canadian Rockies.* In *Motor Life*, New York. June 1919  
 $13 \times 10$ : pp. 40-41, 106: ill.
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- Jegerlehner, Johannes.** *La route du Loetschberg.* Illustrations de Fred. Boissonnas. Genève, Sadag [?] 1918  
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- Miller, Leo E.** In the wilds of South America: Six years of exploration in Colombia, Venezuela, British Guiana, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil. New York, Scribner, 1919. \$4.50  
 $9 \times 6$ : pp. xiv, 428: map, plates.
- Records of expeditions for investigation of fauna and flora: and for the study of the various peoples in the districts. The Andes were crossed at several places. The following legend is interesting: 'Huana Potosi has a flat top. When the world was young, vapors enveloped all the earth; suddenly the sun-god appeared and, beaming down from heaven, caused the mists to become dissipated and vanish. Illimani awoke to life and from his dizzy height beheld the queenly Huana Potosi smiling up at him. At the same time, however, Murarata emerged from the clouds and, beholding the beautiful Huana Potosi, fell violently in love with her. Illimani became insanely jealous, and in a blind fury hurled forth fire, smoke, and stones at his rival's head; the latter promptly replied in kind. . . .

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**Montana.** In Senior Officers' Club Year Book, 1919-20.

7½ × 5: pp. 49-63: ill.

London, Hazell, Watson, 1919

**Mougin, P.** Avalanches dans le Vivarais. In *La Géographie*, Paris, t. 32, no. 2.

10 × 7½: pp. 102-103.

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**Muir, John.** Steep trails. Edited by William Frederick Bade.

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**New Zealand.** Tourist and Health Resorts Department: Report. 1919

'Hermitage. High ascents were quite out of the question in the early part of the season, and a number of climbers went away disappointed. The bad weather continued on through the season till the beginning of February. Six weeks of fine summer weather followed, and when the mountains were in climbing condition, with the exception of Mr. S. Turner, there were no other climbers wishing to make high ascents, so the guides' department suffered considerably. . . . The heavy snowstorms of last winter did serious damage to the King Memorial Hut and the Sefton bivouac, the heavy weight of snow crushing in the roof, breaking many of the rafters and stays. . . . The chamois and thar liberated on the reserve have been seen several times during the summer. . . . The chief climb during the season was the solitary ascent of Mount Cook by Mr. S. Turner. He is the first unaided amateur to make the ascent. . . . Ascents were made on Hochstetter Dome, Mount Kitchener, Mount Annette, Mount Wakefield, Barron's Saddle etc.'

**Portier, Francis.** Grimentz Village Valaisan. Texte de Léon Dunand. 10 planches fac-similés des peintures de Francis Portier.

11 × 14: pp. 4: col. plates: 6½ × 8½.

Genève, Sadag, 1919

**Rabot, Ch.** Observations glaciaires dans les Alpes en 1916 et 1917. In *La Géographie*, Paris, t. 32, no. 1.

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11 × 7½: pp. 20-23.

— Les variations des surfaces boisées dans les Alpes du Dauphiné pendant les deux derniers siècles. In *La Géographie*, Paris, vol. 32, no. 1.

10 × 7½: pp. 23-26.

The forests appear to have been considerably increased in area, and the theory that severe floods were largely due to deforestation would appear to be untenable.

— La neige dans les Alpes françaises. In *La Géographie*, Paris, t. 32, no. 3.

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**Ramuz, C. F., et Bille, Edm.** Le village dans la montagne.

14 × 10½: pp. 260: col. and other plates.

Lausanne, Payot, 1918

**Rey, Guido.** Alpinisme acrobatique. Traduit de l'italien par Emile Gaillard.

8½ × 6: pp. xvi, 336: plates.

Chambéry, Dardel, 1919

**Rinehart, Mary Roberts.** Tenting to-night. A Chronicle of Sport and Adventure in Glacier Park and the Cascade Mountains.

Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1918

8 × 5½: pp. ix, 188: plates.

An interesting account of one of the great mountain parks of the United States, with excellent clear pictures of the scenery.

- of North and South America, from California, British Columbia, and Alaska. . . . London, Richards, 1919  
 $9 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ : pp. xi, 356: plates: map.
- Ferrand, H.** L'alpinismo. In *La Sorgente*, Riv. mensile, Milano, anno 3, ni. 4-5. 15 aprile, 15 maggio 1919  
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Wild Wool: A geologist's winter walk: Summer days at Mount Shasta: A perilous night on Shasta's summit: Shasta rambles and memories: The City of the Saints: The San Gabriel Mountains: Glacial phenomena in Nevada: The forests of Washington: Ascent of Mount Rainier: Rivers of Oregon: Grand Canyon: etc.

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## NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1919.

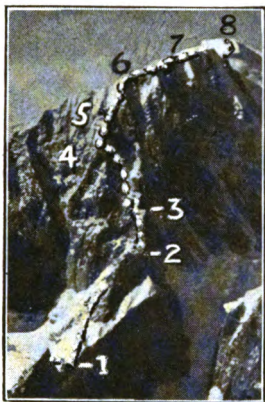
### Mont Blanc Group.

MONT BLANC (4810 m. = 15,782 ft.) BY THE SOUTH FACE. August 20, 1919.—S. L. Courtauld and E. G. Oliver, with Henri and Adolphe Rey and Adolf Aufdenblatten spent the night, August 19–20, 1919, on some rocks just to the North of the Col du Fresnay, about 11,850 ft.

The party, climbing on two ropes, left the bivouac at 06.05 on August 20, and went first by ice and then by easy rocks up the ridge which divides the upper Fresnay and Brouillard Glaciers. They passed a little below and to the West of the summit of a small peak

mentioned by Mr. Eccles in *ALPINE JOURNAL*, viii. 411, and descended on to the Col. Thence they followed the continuation of the ridge, up easy but rotten rocks, until just below two red towers. The first of these was climbed by a difficult chimney to the left, the rock being nearly vertical but very firm, and the second which stands a little to the West of the ridge, was turned by climbing steep grey rocks on its crest (09.30). After passing some easier rocks the party halted for breakfast at 09.50, at about 13,600 ft.

Starting again at 10.25, the party passed along a short level knife-edge of snow, and arrived at a point where the ridge hitherto followed becomes very steep and uninviting; they therefore traversed to the left, into the broad couloir to the West. This couloir consisted of rock, snow, and ice; it is closed at the top by red cliffs which fall from near the summit ridge, and breaks away at its lower end into precipitous gullies and grey rock faces, which descend to the head of the Brouillard Glacier. Easy rocks were climbed on the left bank of the couloir for about half an hour; the party then crossed to the West over ice and rocks to a first and immediately afterwards to a second rib of rocks in the couloir, and ascended the second rib without difficulty to the point where it joins the right bank of the couloir. A gully descending to this point from the crest of the conspicuous ridge forming the right bank of the couloir was then climbed by easy ice and rocks; and the crest was gained just below a prominent red tower with an overhanging top

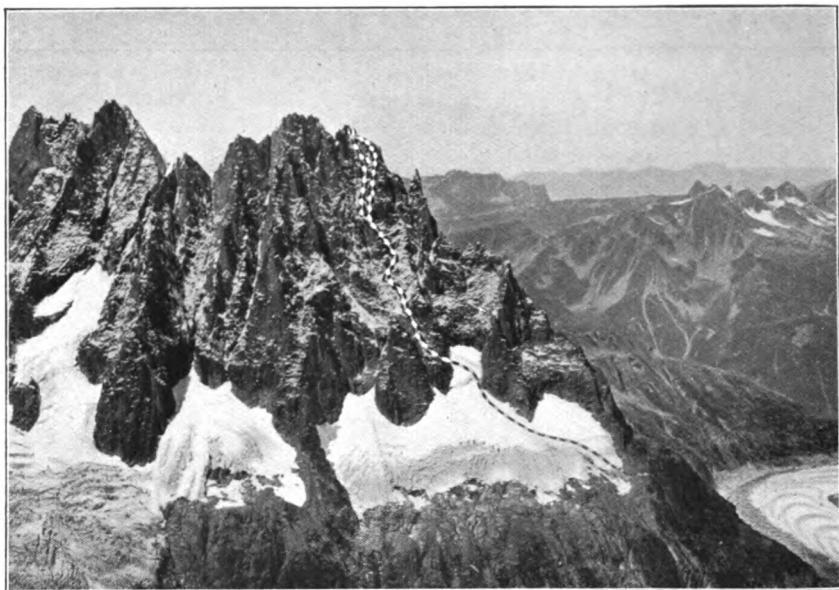


1. COL DU FRESNAÿ. (Bivouac.) Started at 06.05.
2. Point reached at 07.55
3. " " " 09.50
4. " " " 12.30
5. " " " 13.30
6. " " " 14.45
7. " " " 15.20
8. Summit " " 16.20

(12.30). The ridge was followed, either on the crest or just below it to the left, interesting climbing being provided by several towers of good rock and snow arêtes. A short halt to put on crampons was made at 13.30 at a point beyond which the ridge became broader and consisted almost entirely of snow; the snow being in bad condition, use was made of a few rocks which protruded to the East of the ridge. One section of very rotten snow was difficult. Finally a rather narrow arête of snow and ice, up which steps were cut, led to the main Brouillard ridge, which was joined at 14.45 at a point about two-thirds of the distance from the Pic Luigi Amedeo to Mont Blanc de Courmayeur. The party then followed the Brouillard ridge over snow and knobs of rock, traversing the snow portions a little below the crest on the North-West side, where the snow was in good condition. The last rocks, about ten minutes below the summit of



THE SOUTH FACE OF M. BLANC  
FROM PUNTA BIOULA (VAL SAVARANCHE)  
(Telephoto)



*Photo, W. F. Doukin*

**CHARMOZ**  
**FROM PIC DU TACUL**



**AIG DU MIDI**  
**FROM PLAN DE L'AIGUILLE**

Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, were reached at 15.20. There a halt was made for lunch.

Proceeding at 15.40, the party traversed across the snow slopes below and to the West of the summit of Mont Blanc de Courmayeur and the rocks to the North of that summit; gained the ridge at its lowest point between Mont Blanc de Courmayeur and Mont Blanc and arrived on the top of Mont Blanc at 16.20.

The ascent occupied  $10\frac{1}{4}$  hours, including three halts totalling about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours.

The party left the summit at 16.30, reached the Vallot Hut at 17.00, the Dôme Hut at 19.30, and Courmayeur at 01.00 on August 21, the expedition having taken 19 hours including halts.

This is a fine expedition and deserves to be repeated, the route could also be used for a descent. It was not dangerous: the risk from stone falls in the couloir was so slight as to be negligible. The difficulties consisted in the steep rock pitches on the lower part of the climb, and in the bad snow below the Brouillard ridge; no long periods of step-cutting were necessary.

**AIGUILLES GRISES RIDGE (Mont Blanc).** (Pt. 3377 m. = 11,076 ft. and the Ridge to Pt. 3647 m. = 11,962 ft.).—In the 1914 edition of the Kurz Guide four points are mentioned, 3247 m., 3377 m., 3647 m., 3800 m. env. Against the first two is 'pas d'informations'; 3647 m. accessible from the Dôme Hut, and 3800 m. from the Col where the ordinary Dôme route joins the ridge connecting 3800 m. with the main Bionnassay ridge. Point 3247 m. looks a short but interesting climb.

On August 7, 1919, leaving the Dôme hut (3120 m.) soon after 6 A.M., and climbing straight up steep snow and easy rocks, I struck the ridge between points 3247 m. and 3377 m. The ridge is good going without any difficulties over 3377 m. to 3647 m.; none of the points have any cairns, and it is hard to say which of two points close together is 3647 m.

Between points 3647 m. and 3800 m., there is some harder climbing, as three or four small points have to be passed. The first gave a pleasant scramble, the second was rather smooth and steep for a single climber of prudent habits, but a descent into a couloir above the Bionnassay Glacier enabled me to turn the difficulty; the rest was not at all difficult, a narrow bit of snow ridge finally leading from point 3800 m. to where the ordinary Dôme route falls in (6 hrs. to Dôme). A very cold wind and lack of condition precluded any idea of completing the ascent of Mont Blanc, and I descended from the Dôme to the Aiguille du Goûter and so to Les Houches. The Aiguille du Goûter is not nearly so good to descend as to ascend, the rocks of the most northerly of the ribs of rock being loose and steeper than those of the ribs further West, but if the easier rocks are taken the crossing of the big couloir when some steps in ice have to be cut is not without risk.

There is a very small stretch, not more than a few score yards, just before leaving the Miage Glacier on the way to the Dôme hut where a concealed crevasse might be met with, but late in August or in a less snowy year the Glacier would probably be dry up to this point. With this exception the route is a good one for those who may be impelled to climb alone. It gets the sun some hours earlier than the Rochers du Mont Blanc route which is horribly cold owing to the high parts of the Brouillard ridge keeping off the sun till late in the morning.

R. L. G. IRVING.

**AIGUILLE DU MIDI (3843 m.=12,608 ft.) FROM PLAN DE L'AIGUILLE.** August 5, 1919.—The objective on the upper part of the mountain was the steep snow-slopes and the edges of a hanging glacier seen from Plan de l'Aiguille immediately below the summit.

Starting at 2.30 A.M. the party crossed the northern arm of the Glacier des Pèlerins, mounted to the l. of a square-headed moraine and reached, at a point immediately above its bergschrund the first conspicuous couloir to the right of those on the N. face of the peak which are overhung by ice. This couloir was followed nearly to its elbow, when the rocks to the right of it proved easily accessible. This buttress is the true right bank of the most conspicuous long couloir which seams the N.W. face of the peak. The rocks were followed without difficulty to the foot of a formidable tower (breakfast 6.30 A.M.); after turning this obstacle on the right by the snow of a tributary couloir, the objective snow-slopes were gained and followed to the edge of the hanging glacier. To avoid cutting up the ice on the right, it was necessary to work up this edge to the bergschrund. A possibility soon presented itself of traversing to the left in order to gain the N.E. arête where a rocky buttress merges into it; but this alternative was rejected as the ice and rocks immediately below the arête looked exceedingly steep and repulsive. It proved possible to turn the bergschrund by climbing a broken ice wall at its western (r.) extremity. It would have been practicable again after this to have traversed to the left, then gaining the arête, by very steep snow, where a spike of rock emerges from it. The party, however, preferred a direct ascent to a point where a perpendicular wall of ice meets the rocks of the lower summit; it was hoped that these rocks could be surmounted easily, but in fact a pitch of 20 ft. was climbed only with great difficulty. The summit was gained at 12.15 P.M.

G. MALLORY.

H. E. L. PORTER.

**GRANDS CHARMOZ (3442 m.=11,293 ft.) FROM GLACIER DE TRÉLAPORTE.** August 2, 1919.—Starting from Montanvert we went up the Mer de Glace, contoured the lower slopes of the N.E. ridge of the Charmoz to the Glacier de Trélaporte, and breakfasted under

the rocks. We then followed the line of previous parties when climbing the Grépon by this face (v. 'A.J.' xxv. 739, and xxvi. 260).

The bergschrund was crossed without great difficulty (6.15 A.M.) on the right. The snow above was in good condition, but it was necessary to chip steps till the rocks were reached and three deep avalanche funnels were crossed. Traversing first to the left, then up shallow grooves, and finally by the easy chimneys bounding the forbidding wall on our right, the level of the 'Red Tower' was reached about 8.30. It was now well away on our left. From this point our objective was a subsidiary arête or rib of rock leading to the first tower on the arête above the Aig. de la République. The lower end of this rib presents a conspicuous red wall and a slabby couloir lies to the left of it. We worked upwards, bearing to the left until near the couloir, traversed right under the red wall and reached the crest of the rib above it by an ascent up slabby but conveniently broken rocks covered in places with snow (10 A.M.).

The rib was then followed to the main N.E. arête of the Charmoz. There was little or no choice of route. The climbing was of a highly interesting character. When confronted, almost too dramatically, by the blank wall of the final tower, we traversed under an overhang to the left. Once the N.E. arête was joined, it was followed to the main crest of the Charmoz (4.15 P.M.) with comparative facility.

Joseph Pollinger, who made the first ascent on this side of the Charmoz, tells us that he went up by the couloir to our left—a fact which accounts for Kurz's condemnatory remark apropos of stones (v. Kurz, 1914, p. 191)—and then by a chimney directly to the summit. He says that some stones fell. Having regard to the quality of the rock, it is difficult to believe that the danger from stones can be extremely great even in the couloir. None fell, or seemed likely to fall, on our rib.

G. MALLORY.

H. E. L. PORTER.

### *Pennines.*

LYSKAMM (4538 m. = 14,889 ft.) BY THE S.W. FACE. August 8, 1919: Messieurs Joseph and Baptiste Gugliermi. M. Joseph Gugliermi writes to Captain Farrar: 'The S.W. face is contained between the arêtes Perazzi and del Naso, and appears to have remained unexplored. A few details of this new ascent, made by my brother Baptiste and myself alone, may interest our colleagues of the A.C. On the morning of August 8 a violent wind delayed our leaving the Cabane Gnifetti until 5.45, when it got rather calmer. Following the ordinary route we were on the Calotte del Naso and at the foot of the S.W. face, on the W. plateau of the Lys glacier, at 8.15. This face, which we saw for the first time, presents itself really splendid and imposing. A direct route seemed quite possible; but



for fear of falling stones or ice, we chose a safer route, commencing by a great rocky spur rather to our right. This we quitted higher up and took to the centre of the face, right to the summit. Leaving the plateau at 9.20, we were on the summit at 4. The ascent took time on account of the steps to be cut; almost everywhere was snow-ice. The rocks were not difficult and the route is interesting throughout, and to be recommended, *starting very early* from the Cabane Sella. Our route is marked on the fine photograph placed at our disposal by Mr. Vittorio Sella. On the summit the wind was again violent and drove us down at once. So as to be sheltered from it, we decided to descend by the S. arête (del Naso) which, covered with snow, took us more time than expected. A little above the Colle del Naso we left the arête and effected the descent to the W. Glacier de Lys by a spur of rocks, broken and unstable, crossing couloirs, and finally by a snow-slope, steep and frozen hard, which, after much work, led us to the bergschrund, gaping wide and very high, without any bridge. After long ineffectual attempts, we finally got over by a jump of 5 to 6 mètres. We reached the Cabane Gnifetti at 11.30 by moonlight, much pleased with our day. . . . Another important expedition, suggested by myself, was done on July 31, by our friend F. Ravelli and some friends, viz.: the first ascent of the W. Lyskamm (4478 m.) by the S. face. Details will appear later.'

## VARIOUS EXPEDITIONS IN 1915 AND 1919.

COL DU MONT DOLENT (3543 m. = 11,625 ft.). E. G. Oliver with Henri Rey and Alexis Brocherel, August 24, 1915.—We left the Cabane du Jardin d'Argentière at 06.00 (French time), and reached the foot of the bergschrund under the Col at 07.10.

The bergschrund was in bad condition, and it took nearly two hours hard step-cutting to pass it (09.00).

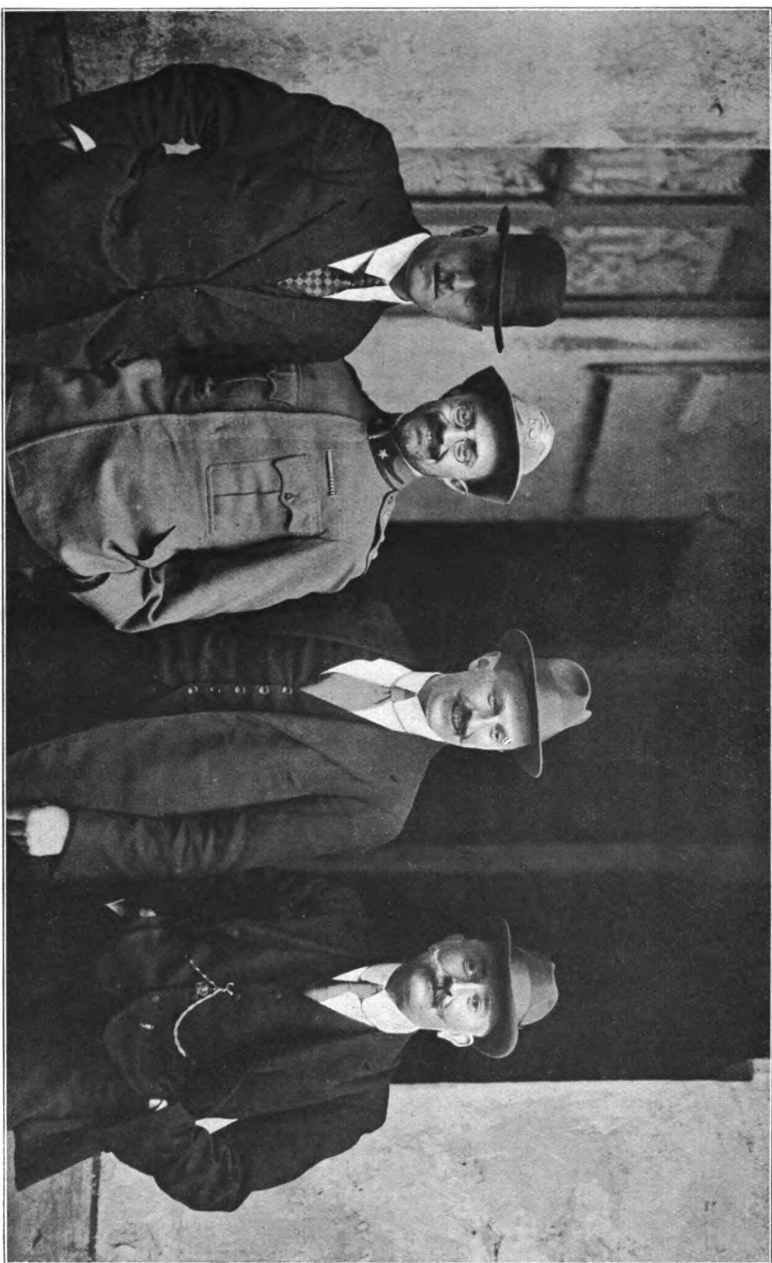
We then cut straight up the ice-slope above the bergschrund to gain the lowest portion of the rocks considerably to the East of the couloir. The first few pitches of these rocks were not difficult, and we made good progress; but above the difficulties accumulated, as the rocks were partly covered with heavy lumps of snow, frozen hard on to them. We were gradually forced more to the East against the very steep rocks, descending from the Pointe du Pré de Bar. These rocks did not look practicable, and, after climbing some very difficult pitches passing under and to the West of them, we traversed in a westerly direction with great difficulty, moving very slowly until we reached a point close to the main couloir descending from the Col (16.00). From this point we could have traversed into the main couloir without much difficulty, and another ice couloir branching to our left in a South-Easterly direction offered an alter-





*Photo. V. Sella*

S.W. FACE OF LYSKAMM  
..... ROUTE GUGLIEMINA



JOSEPH GUGLIERMINA

CAPT. G. LAMPUGNANI

F. RAVELLI

BAPTISTE GUGLIERMINA

A GROUP OF DISTINGUISHED ITALIAN MOUNTAINEERS

native route to the summit ridge. The rocks directly above us were very steep and plastered with snow and verglas.

After a short consultation we decided to try the couloir to the left, chiefly because the rocks above it looked not too difficult, and also fairly free of snow. An hour's step-cutting in hard ice brought us to the top of the couloir; but the rocks above proved much more difficult than we anticipated, and had a good deal of verglas on them.

After two hours of very arduous climbing, during which we were obliged to move with the greatest precaution, we reached the summit ridge and found we were on the top of a peak without name or height on the B.I.K. map, but described in Kurz's 'Guide de la Chaîne du Mont Blanc' (ed. 1914, p. 63), as P. 3614 m. between the Col and the Pointe du Pré de Bar (19.00).

Hence we descended on to the Col, which was reached at 19.30 (very difficult).

We at once started the descent of the Italian side and reached the last rocks above the bergschrund at 21.15 p.m.

Here we halted for the first time since leaving the hut and thought our troubles were over. We were fortunate enough to have a brilliant full moon. Without this we must inevitably have been benighted higher up.

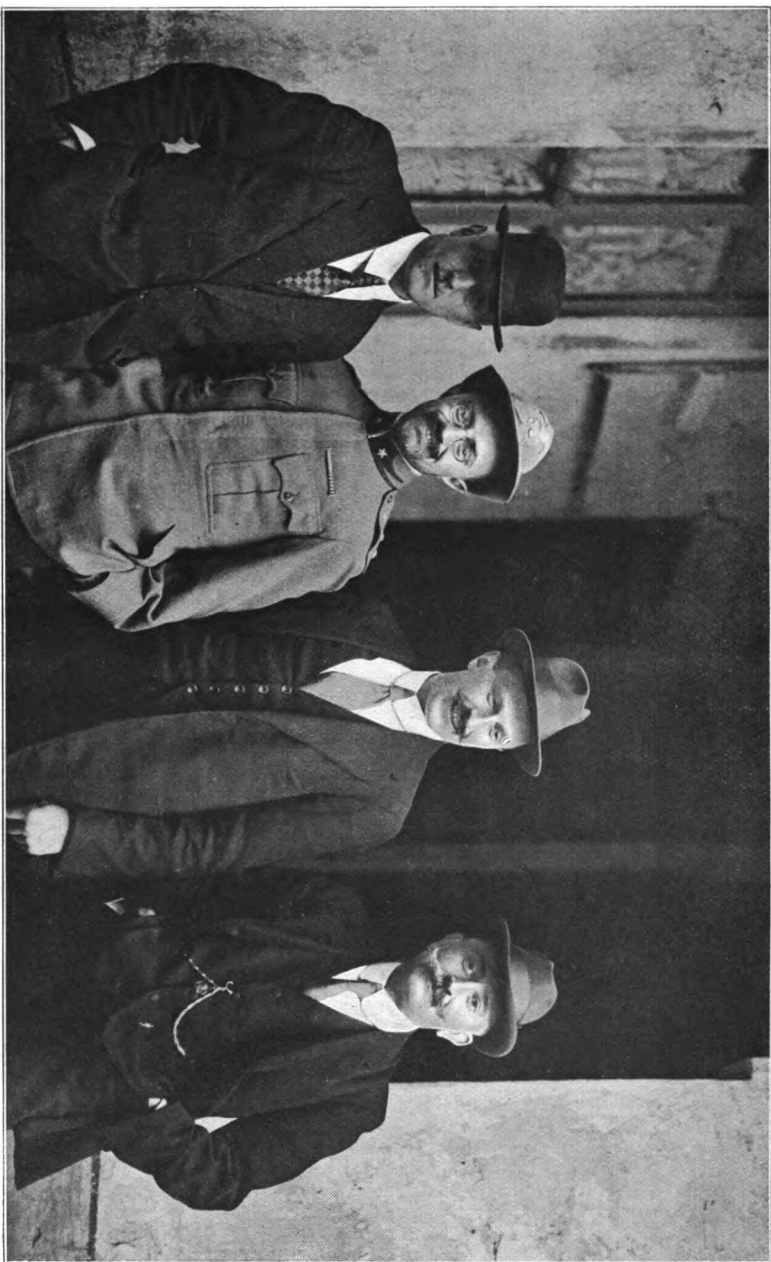
We started again at 22.15, but found the bergschrund very high and difficult. Two and a half hours were consumed in step-cutting before reaching the level part of the glacier (00.45).

We reached La Vachey at 05.20 (Italian time), after nearly 22½ hours' going.

This was the most difficult expedition in which I have ever taken part, and both guides think the same. During the period of more than twelve hours, which were occupied in climbing from below the bergschrund to the Col, we were never for a moment comfortable, and were unable to halt at all. The expedition afforded a good illustration of how much the standard of difficulty depends upon conditions. We ought of course, in the conditions existing, to have cut steps straight up the couloir to the Col, using the rocks on the right bank where possible. As a matter of fact, we had determined to do this when we inspected the route while walking up the Argentière Glacier the previous day, as it was evident the rocks were badly plastered with snow. The couloir, however, looked so repulsive from just below that we weakly changed our intention at the last moment and took to the rocks.

We should again have saved much time if we had traversed into the main couloir at the point reached at 16.00, instead of taking the couloir to the left. We had no crampons; but I do not think they would have been much use in the circumstances. A longer rope would have helped us in places—we had only 100 feet and no spare rope. Fortunately the weather was very fine.

EDMUND G. OLIVER.



JOSEPH GUGLIERMINA

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EDMUND G. OLIVER.

**AIGUILLE DE ROCHEFORT** (4003 m. = 13,134 ft.) and **DÔME DE ROCHEFORT** (4012 m. = 13,164 ft.). S. L. Courtauld and E. G. Oliver, with Adolphe Rey and Adolf Aufdenblatten. August 9, 1919.—The party left the Rifugio Torino at 04.15, and reached the usual breakfast place below the Dent du Géant at 06.00. Leaving at 06.45, the ridge was followed, except that the large gendarme (P. 3933 m. on B.I.K. map) was turned on its North side; the top of the Aiguille de Rochefort<sup>1</sup> was reached by the rotten rocks on its North-West face at 09.15.

This arête, which was very narrow in places, consisted generally of snow, alternating with a certain amount of ice. It was interesting and difficult, chiefly owing to heavy cornices to the South.

The party left the top of the Aiguille at 11.10, and passing over the narrow arête between the peaks, reached the top of the Dôme at 13.15. This arête was even more corniced than the arête on the other side of the Aiguille, and afforded some interesting snow climbing. The final climb up the Dôme is on rotten rocks, but is quite easy.

The party returned by the same route; leaving the top of the Dôme at 13.45, they reached the hut at 17.30, and Courmayeur at 20.15, after a halt of rather over half an hour at the hut.

The return journey was more difficult as the snow had become soft in places owing to the hot sun, and the cornices required very careful manipulation.

Later in the season it was observed that the climb became much easier as many of the cornices had fallen down, and it would have been possible in some places to have taken to the rocks below the arête on the South side of it.

**DENT DU GÉANT** (4014 m. = 13,170 ft.), BY NORTH-WEST FACE. Mario Piacenza, S. L. Courtauld and E. G. Oliver, with Henri and Adolphe Rey, Joseph Carrel and Adolf Aufdenblatten, August 25, 1919.—The party started from the Rifugio Torino at 09.00 and reached the usual breakfast place below the Dent at 10.30. Leaving at 11.30, they passed over the snow shoulder leading towards the Rochefort ridge, and then descended to the North about 100 mètres on the East side of the Dent, and close to it, at first by ice and then rotten rocks, until below a rock couloir leading up to the prominent shoulder on the North arête of the peak. They climbed this couloir to reach the shoulder on which is a flagstaff (12.30).

From here they traversed over a sloping slab on to the North-West face, which was climbed, gradually traversing to the right until a chimney leading to the Col between the two peaks of the Dent was reached, by which the highest point was reached at 14.30.

They left the top at 15.30, reached the breakfast place at 16.20

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<sup>1</sup> [Cf. *A.J.* xxv. 449 *seq.*, for information on the Rochefort arête.]

by the ordinary route, and leaving this at 17.00 reached the hut at 18.15.

This expedition is not nearly so difficult as it looks. It is certainly very steep, but the holds are good; though care is required owing to rotten rock in places. In good condition and free from ice, it is, in the opinion of each member of the party, much more to be recommended than swarming up the ropes of the ordinary route.

MONT BLANC (4810 m. = 15,782 ft.), BY THE BRENVIA GLACIER. S. L. Courtauld and E. G. Oliver, with Henri and Adolphe Rey and Adolf Aufdenblatten. August 13, 1919.—The previous day the guides had been sent to cut steps up to the Col de la Tour Ronde, but found the bergschrund under both East and West Cols impassable. They succeeded, however, in passing the bergschrund much further to the North under a small Col that forms the gap nearest Mont Maudit. (This appears to be the Col crossed in the opposite direction by Messrs. Bartleet and Mothersill in 1907.) This bergschrund was far from easy, and occupied  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 hours step-cutting.

The party left the Rifugio Torino at 02.30 and crossed the Col above described over ice and steep rocks, reaching the upper basin of the Brenva Glacier at 05.30, after some trouble with the bergschrund on the further side. The night having been very warm the snow was far from good between the hut and the foot of the Col. At least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours was saved by the steps cut the previous day.

The Brenva Glacier was crossed, and a halt of half an hour made on the further side, where crampons were put on.

Close to the South-West rose the snowy flank of the great buttress, bounded by rocks on both sides. The crest of this buttress has been sometimes termed the Brenva arête, part of it being the ice arête, the passage of which is so graphically described by Mr. A. W. Moore in his account of the first ascent.

The steep snow-slope leading towards the crest of the buttress was ascended, the débris of numerous avalanches being passed on the way. The snow was very firm here and no difficulties were met with, until the bergschrund was reached below the final very steep slope leading to the crest of the buttress. This part of the climb is undoubtedly exposed to danger of ice-fall from threatening séracs above and to the right.

The bergschrund, which had a large overhanging lip, gave considerable trouble; but, after a good deal of step-cutting and a sensational traverse inside the bergschrund, it was surmounted and the top of the buttress reached at 08.10.

The danger in ascending the buttress by the snow-slopes could be avoided by climbing the rocks considerably to the left of the route above described; but this alternative looks considerably longer.\*

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\* [Cf. *A.J.* xxviii. 306 seq.]

The crest of the buttress was surmounted at a point above the narrowest part of the famous arête (which on this occasion was neither ice nor particularly narrow). It was here observed that an easier way over the bergschrund lay to the left of the route described, and would have brought the party on to the crest of the buttress, below instead of above the narrowest part of the arête.

The ascent proceeded up the arête over good snow (broad and easy) for about half an hour, until it merged in the face of the mountain; then, as the slopes above were all hard ice, a traverse to the right was made to gain a rib of steep rocks leading straight upwards. These rocks, alternating with snow and ice, were ascended without any particular difficulty to a point just below the highest rocks and close to the upper séracs (10.20).

Halt of twenty minutes for second breakfast.

From this point step-cutting in hard ice was for a long time necessary. The line taken was at first straight up the ice slopes, in continuation of the line of rocks already climbed, until further progress became impossible owing to ice-cliffs and large crevasses. The party then turned sharp to the left and traversed round the East and South sides of a very high and prominent pinnacle of ice, after passing which they turned to the right up a steep ice-slope, and on to an ice-ridge which connected the pinnacle to the glacier. Turning to the left along the ridge, direct progress was barred by a line of ice-cliffs; but a way through these cliffs was found by traversing along a shelf of glacier to the right. The séracs were finally passed at 13.15, after 2½ hours of continuous step-cutting in hard blue ice.

After a halt of about half an hour, the Petits Rochers Rouges were reached over easy snow-slopes at 13.55, and the top of Mont Blanc at 14.30.

The descent was at once commenced, and the Cabane Vallot reached at 15.00.

(Halt of half an hour.)

The descent was continued by the Dôme route, the snow on the Dôme Glacier being very bad.

The Dôme hut was reached at 18.00, and after a halt at the springs of water about half an hour below the hut, the party arrived at the Hôtel Royal, Courmayeur, at 22.30. Time, 20 hours including halts.

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## ALPINE NOTES.

'BALL'S ALPINE GUIDE.' THE WESTERN ALPS.—Copies of the new edition (1898) of this work can be obtained from all booksellers, or from Edward Stanford, Limited, 12 Long Acre, W.C. 2. Price 12s. net.



'BALL'S ALPINE GUIDE,' THE CENTRAL ALPS. PART I.—A new edition (1907) of this portion of 'The Alpine Guide,' by the late John Ball, F.R.S., President of the Alpine Club, reconstructed and revised on behalf of the Alpine Club under the general editorship of A. V. Valentine-Richards, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, can be obtained from all booksellers, or from Edward Stanford, Limited, 12 Long Acre, W.C. 2. It includes those portions of Switzerland to the N. of the Rhône and Rhine valleys. Price 6s. 6d. net.

'BALL'S ALPINE GUIDE,' THE CENTRAL ALPS. PART II.—A new edition (1911) of this portion of 'The Alpine Guide,' by the late John Ball, F.R.S., President of the Alpine Club, reconstructed and revised on behalf of the Alpine Club under the general editorship of the Rev. George Broke, can be obtained from all booksellers, or from Edward Stanford, Limited, 12 Long Acre, W.C. 2. It includes those Alpine portions of Switzerland, Italy, and Austria which lie S. and E. of the Rhône and Rhine, S. of the Arlberg, and W. of the Adige. Price 7s. 6d. net.

MAP OF THE VALSESIA.—Some copies of the Map issued with the ALPINE JOURNAL, No. 209, and of the plates opposite pages 108 and 128 in No. 208, are available and can be obtained from the Assistant Secretary, Alpine Club, 23 Savile Row, W. Price for the set (the Map mounted on cloth), 3s.

CLUBFÜHRER DURCH DIE WALLISER-ALPEN (CLIMBERS' GUIDE TO THE PENNINE ALPS).—Vol. III., in 2 parts, of this new Climbers' Guide, edited by Dr. Dübi, covering the country from the Théodule to the Simplon, has just been published (in German). The price of the volume (to members of the S.A.C.) is 5fr. 15c. Post free from the Quæstor of the respective section. The book is so well furnished with route-marked illustrations that a very scanty knowledge of German suffices for its use.

The volume from the Col Ferret to the Théodule is in a forward state.

THE LATE F. W. NEWMARCH.—Mr. R. R. Howlett writes to Mr. R. W. Brant:—

'By the way, you make one slight slip in referring to the season of 1908. The climb, which took 20 hours, was the traverse of Les Ecrins from South to North, not the Pelvoux.

'Well I know it, as I was with Newmarch and we had enormous trouble in descending the North Face in bad weather.

'It was the only peak we did that season, owing to the shocking weather, but it was worth three ordinary peaks in interest and hard work.'

ASCENT OF M. BLANC IN 1854.—Notes from a letter of the late Mr. John Orred (uncle of Mr. H. G. Willink) and copy of Hotel Bill:—

*'Ascent of M. Blanc fr. & to Chamonix.'*

John Orred & 4 guides

Harry Rawson & 4 guides

Another gentleman & 4 guides

(15 people altogr.)

1854.

Mon. 11 Sept. Left Ch<sup>x</sup> 7 A.M.

arr<sup>d</sup>. G<sup>ds</sup> Mulets 1 P.M.

T. 12 „ Got up at midnight.

Reached top in 6<sup>h</sup> 20<sup>min</sup>, stayed 35<sup>min</sup>

G<sup>ds</sup> Mulets in 3½ h<sup>rs</sup>, stayed there 1½.

Arr<sup>d</sup> Cham<sup>x</sup> in 5 h<sup>rs</sup>

*'Fine weather. Perfection of sublimity.'*

The syndic gave the travellers certificates of ascent signed by the guides. J. O.'s certificate states his weight, and that no man of his size had ever before seen the summit.

*'A short time ago Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton went up to top.'*

*'HÔTEL ROYAL DE L'UNION,*

*'Chamonix.*

*'Tenu par FERDINAND EISENKRÆMER*

*'Propriétaire-maître*

*'Messrs. — Provision du Mont Blanc.*

	ff.
'Sept. 12 2 B <sup>lles</sup> de Champagne . . . . .	14
4 B <sup>lles</sup> de Limonade . . . . .	4
2 B <sup>lles</sup> de Cognac . . . . .	12
4 B <sup>lles</sup> de Beaujolais . . . . .	12
8 B <sup>lles</sup> de St. Fiun . . . . .	20
28 B <sup>lles</sup> de Vin Ordinaire . . . . .	28
2 B <sup>lles</sup> de Thé . . . . .	4
1 B <sup>lles</sup> de Lait . . . . .	1
du chocolat . . . . .	8
des raisin confu . . . . .	3
2 gigots de moutons . . . . .	16
2 pièces de Bœuf et veau . . . . .	14
20 poulets rôtis . . . . .	60
du pain . . . . .	6
du Beure et fromage . . . . .	4.50
deux Bougies . . . . .	2
verres perdu 49 B <sup>lles</sup> à 50 <sup>ctmes</sup> . . . . .	24.50
<hr/>	
'provision du Mont Blanc . . . . .	233
'pr Acquit . . . . .	135
<hr/>	

(signed) *'EISENKRÆMER.'*

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THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY.—

	Date of Election.
John Stogdon . . . . .	1869
Frederick Anthony Wallroth . . . . .	1869
Frederick Gardiner . . . . .	1871
Rev. Florence Thomas Wethered . . . . .	1873
Lt.-Col. Sir Henry Trotter . . . . .	1875
Rev. Canon Arthur Sloman . . . . .	1879
F. W. Headley . . . . .	1882
John Herbert Wicks . . . . .	1885
Charles Cannan . . . . .	1885
Walter Larden . . . . .	1886
Alfred G. Topham . . . . .	1886
Rev. Canon Henry Martin . . . . .	1896
Charles Edward Groves . . . . .	1900
Dr. Francisco Moreno (Hon. Member) . . . . .	1902

THE MEIJE.—On September 13 Mr. Raeburn, unaccompanied, made the traverse from the Bec de l'Aigle hut to the Promontoire hut, whence, next day, he regained La Grave, by the Brèche.

From the Gl. Carré he explored the descent to the Brèche by going down the arête about one-third of the way. He reports it extremely rotten. The weather turned bad, with hail, so he remounted to the Glacier and followed the ordinary line of descent to the Promontoire.

THE LATE MR. DONKIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS.—The stock formerly held by Mr. Spooner is now in the hands of Mr. J. P. Stevens, 100 Hazelville Road, N. 19. The small series is complete, and the larger copies of the principal negatives can also be obtained. Prices are 1s. 6d. and 12s. 6d. respectively. Lists are available.

CORRIGENDA.—'A.J.' vol. xxxii. (v. also p. 273), p. 367, line 18 from bottom, *read* 'Mr. F. O. Wethered.' Mr. Wethered is a cousin of our very splendid veteran, the late F. T. Wethered. He rowed No. 6 in the Oxford boat in the 1885, 1886, and 1887 Inter-University races, and was formerly a member of the A.C.

P. 386, *for* 'about' *read* 'above.'

THE DEATH OF MRS. MORSHEAD is announced in *The Times* of Oct. 3.

TRAVERSE OF LES DROITES.—The late Karl Steiner's traverse, referred to in 'A.J.' xxxii. 365, was made from the Col between it and the Verte to the Col between it and Les Courtes. He kept to the actual ridge and the climb, which took fourteen hours, is described as more difficult than the Grépon or the Dru traverses. (Communicated by Capt. G. Finch.)

VOL. XXXIII.—NO. CCXX.

K

A NEW ROAD is projected from Mégève to St. Gervais and *via* Bionnay over the Col de Voza to Les Houches.

M. PAUL MONTANDON writes to Capt. Farrar, October 26, 1919 : 'I have also been up a new little summit in the Bietschthal, of 3500 m. height (S.E. of the Bietschhorn, in fact its S.E. shoulder), and a month ago I followed Mr. Young's steps up the Rote Zähne, [Gspaltenhorn] or rather over them. This latter ascent I am quite enthusiastic about, and if ever I can I will repeat it next year. Put it upon your future program in any case, and take Rumpf of Kienthal with you, who has done it twice now and knows all about it. I do not know of any ascent resembling this one—it is very original and the rocks and towers there are of the grandest description. There is, in fact, only one very difficult place—the overhang on tower No. 2—but it is very long, the (moderate) difficulties do not cease until you are almost on the top of Gspaltenhorn and the Abseilereien (5–6) are rather exciting—even afterwards, when you think about them.'

THE LATE CHRISTIAN JOSSI.—I have been away abroad for eight months, and have not seen the November number of the 'A.J.' I only heard last night at the Club Meeting of the death of my old friend Christian Jossi, news which causes me the greatest regret. Christian was not only a first-rate guide, master of ice-craft, and remarkably safe and good on rock, but he had the qualities that make a really good mate. Cheerful and good-tempered always, the only time I remember him in the slightest degree cross was one morning at the old Stockje hut, which used to be overrun with 'chamois.' I had slept the sleep of the just, with never a toss, while he and Peter Taugwalder had been tossing and tumbling about all night. He was very strong and absolutely untiring, and had an infinite capacity for hard work. I remember an awful long day we had by the Hühnergutz route up the Wetterhorn in bad weather. Bold, and yet extraordinarily careful, Christian had a most unselfish disposition, and added to all these he had another excellent qualification—he was a really good cook.

CLAUDE A. MACDONALD.

THE JUPPERHORN (GRISONS).—The route along the West ridge—first taken by Messrs. Solly and Williams, July 22, 1914 ('A.J.' xxviii. 401)—seems not to have been done since then, or at all events only by going round the red gendarme and by the South face.

On July 23, 1919, a Swiss party followed the ridge up to the peak, and then along the East ridge to the Mazzerspitz (Route Helbling, 1903). They began with a short stretch of the East ridge, then obliquely across the South wall somewhat under the ridge and back again to the ridge.

Owing to change in the weather they were obliged to descend,

and climbed some two-thirds of the way down the rotten, steep South wall, until the steep pitches obliged them to continue down a snow-filled couloir. This route is probably new, and only to be recommended in a summer with plenty of snow, as the couloirs of the South wall are very dangerous on account of falling stones.—*Alpina*, September 15, 1919.

**THE RIDGE FROM THE GRIVOLA TO THE GRIVOLETTA.**—This ridge was traversed by Louis Pélissier of Valtournanche, and Cipriano Savoye and Enrico Rey of Courmayeur in August 1918. *Rivista Mensile*. 'C.A.I.' vol. xxxvii. p. 178.

**THE GRAIAN DISTRICT IN 1919.**—Those travelling in any of the three valleys of Lanzo would do well to avoid the week of fêtes in August. There is then scarcely a spare bed in the whole district. In any case, prices this year were enormous. In the Valsavaranche, on the other hand, they were phenomenally low, on a pre-war scale in fact. There is no big town within easy reach, as in the case of the Lanzo valleys.

At Ceresole, local guides reported that the useful Piantonetto hut had fallen into ruins. The Vittorio Emanuele hut was open and staffed, but the well-built and well-furnished little inn at Pont only supplied lodging without board. Next year it is hoped to open it again properly.

At Bonneval-sur-Arc, it is worth noting that the Levannas may be included in the fine list of peaks accessible from the excellent Evettes hut, though the expedition may take 12 hours, if more than one Levanna is included.

C. F. MEADE.

**CHRISTIAN KLUCKER**, of Sils-Fex, Engadine.—The many friends of this famous guide will be much interested to hear that his duties as President of the Commune of Sils-Maria, and threatened erysipelas in the head when exposed to strong sun, which from 1906 to 1917 compelled him to decline long engagements, are now such as permit of his resuming his work as guide. In the autumn of 1917, and the summers of 1918 and 1919, he was hard at work in the Bregaglia group, and among other expeditions ascended the Cima di Largo (twice), Punta Rasica, Ago di Sciora (three times), Il Gallo (twice), etc., etc. His engagements for the coming summer may take him toward the end of August to the Zermatt district, in which so many of his famous climbs were made.

Klucker is now in his 68th year, but writes that ascents, especially rock climbs, *noch sehr gut gehen*.

When one remembers the enormous strength and endurance of the redoubtable little man, and the careful life he has always led, one can well understand his present powers. Moreover, in general

intelligence, and in profound knowledge of a mountain in any conditions, he has never been surpassed, if indeed rivalled, by any guide of his generation, while as a travelling companion he is perfect. It is interesting to learn that Klucker is writing his mountaineering reminiscences. May he continue long in the pursuit to which he is an outstanding credit, and which he loves so well !

J. P. F.

**DR. PAUL GÜSSFELDT.**—The death of this eminent mountaineer took place in January. He was born in 1840, and was in his day among the very boldest mountaineers. He descended the Col du Lion by its great ice couloir on the Swiss side, led by Alexander Burgener. The expedition was carried out by Burgener on the initiative of Dr. Güssfeldt, and by every rule both of them ought to have been killed.

Much of his best work was done in the Bernina Group including the Güssfeldtsattel, the traverse of Monte Scerscen and the Berninascharte. In 1882 he made an expedition to the Andes, but two attacks on Aconcagua failed. His journey is described in his *Reise in den Andes*.

Dr. Güssfeldt's last great expedition was the traverse in 1893 of the Aig. Blanche de Peuteret and the Mont Blanc de Courmayeur. He was led by the great guides Klucker and Emile Rey, with the fine porter César Ollier. The expedition lasted 88 hours, and was a marvellous exhibition of unbending energy on the part of the traveller, at a time when his condition and bodily powers were past their prime.

He was the author of *In den Hochalpen* and *Der Mont Blanc*.

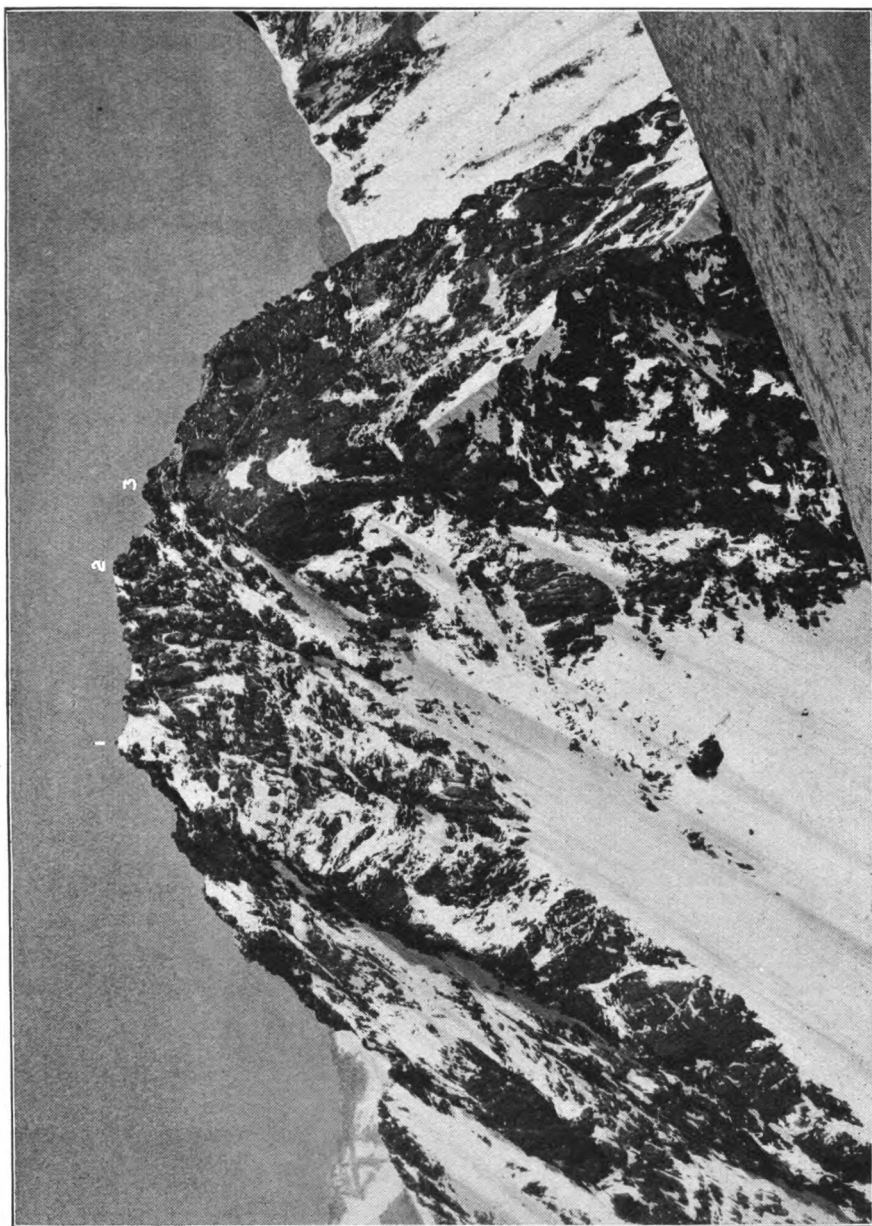
**MOUNT OLYMPUS.**—The first ascent of the central peak of the Massif was made last summer by M. Baud-Bovy, the hon. director of the École des Beaux Arts at Geneva, accompanied by M. Boissonnas, the well-known photographer. A full report is announced.

**EXPEDITION TO SIKKIM.**—Mr. Harold Raeburn, 18 Bruntsfield Avenue, Edinburgh, is organising an expedition to leave England in April. Application should be made to him for further information.

**GOTTFRIED BOHREN**, the Gemeinde-President of Grindelwald, who is a thoroughly safe guide (speaks English), to whom I have been more than once indebted for information and work in the interests of the Club, is open to engagements this coming summer.

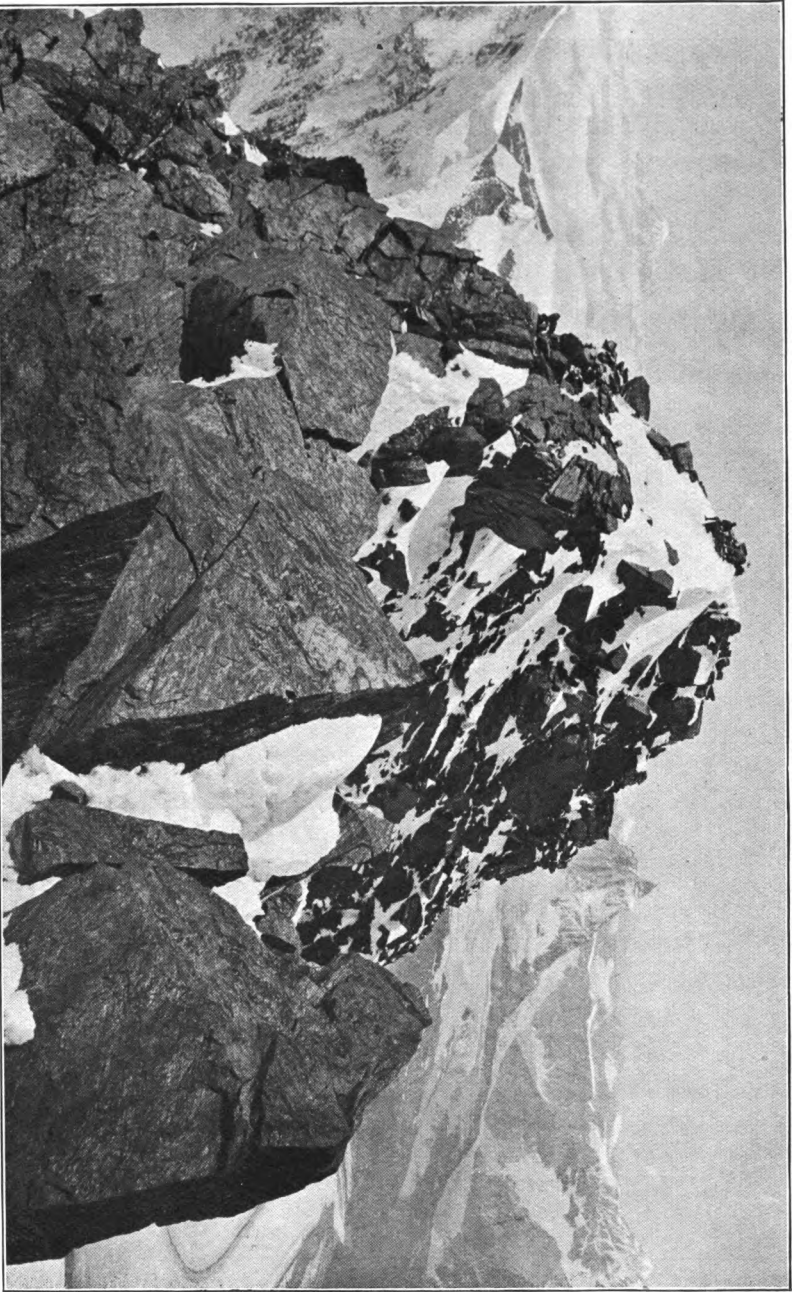
J. P. FARRAR.

**THE HISTORY OF MONTE ROSA.**—In my article 'The Early Attempts on Monte Rosa from the Zermatt side' ('A.J.' xxxi. 323 seq.), supplemented by Mr. Montagnier's article 'The Nordend and Summit Ridge of Monte Rosa from the Silbersattel' ('A.J.' xxxii.



SUMMIT RIDGE OF MONTE ROSA  
FROM ZUMSTEINSPITZE

*Photo. H. Speyer*



*Photo. H. Spyger]*

**DUFOURSPIITZE  
FROM OSTSPITZE**



250 seq.), we gave nearly all the views that are necessary to the argument.

I am much indebted to Mr. Henry Speyer, whose many great expeditions in the nineties, mostly with the late Christian Jessi, are fresh in the memories of climbers of those days, for the photographs now reproduced.

The Summit ridge from the Zumsteinspitze is the reverse of the view from the Nordend (xxxii. opp. 250).

Point 1 is the Dufourspitze—the long ridge leading right to its summit is the so-called route 'by the rocks' or 'Cresta Rey.'

Point 2 is the Ostspitze.

Point 3 is point  $\times$  or Grenzgipfel of Mr. Coolidge's 'Alpine Studies' (pp. 224-9). The ascent of this point from the Grenzsattel is easily made in about an hour.

The ridge leading to the Nordend is seen on the extreme right.

The view of the Dufourspitze from the Ostspitze makes it rather difficult to understand why the Schlagintweits and the Smyths, in 1854, did not continue to what they knew to be the higher summit, which was only attained the following year from the reverse direction. A man is seen seated on the summit rocks of the Dufour.

J. P. FARRAR.

The life of De Saussure, on which Mr. Freshfield and Mr. Montagnier have been engaged during the last four years, is now in the press.

CORRIGENDUM.—'A.J.' xxix. p. 352, line 19 from top, for 1906 read 1909 (Capt. Ryan's climbs).

**THE LATE MR. WALLROTH.**—As we go to press, we learn with great regret the death of this eminent member of over 50 years' standing in the Club. A full notice will appear later.

## REVIEWS.

*The Canadian Alpine Journal*, vol. ix. 1918, vol. x. 1919.

As was perhaps to be expected, these two volumes contain very little actual mountaineering: in fact, apart from two articles by Mr. Fynn, which appear almost in the same form in our own JOURNAL, the only serious climbing paper is one in vol. ix. by Mr. Hickson, in which he records the conquest of Mount Moloch—a strange-looking and evidently difficult rock peak, at the head of the N. branch of Illecillewaet river (Northern Selkirks). It has repulsed an unusually large number of attacks by the writer of the paper and

others, and only yielded after a severe struggle. Miss Edwards describes in charming prose and passable verse the process of being converted from a 'graduating' into an 'active' member of the A.C.C., and Mr. Harker treats the same subject in a frankly burlesque vein.

Among the papers which may be roughly classed together under the heading of 'Mountain Travel,' the letter from Lieut.-Colonel Mitchell, C.M.G., D.S.O., one of the Vice-Presidents of the Club, written from 'somewhere in the Asiago region' in April-May, 1918, is of outstanding interest; we shall hope to see transferred to the pages of the 'Bollettino' of the C.A.I.: if not the whole letter, at least the glowing tribute it contains from an expert mountaineer to the splendid work of the 'Alpini.'

The next place must certainly be given to the indefatigable Miss Jobe, who describes her third visit to Mount Sir Alexander (*alias* Kitchi), in the autumn in 1917—an expedition which, if not exactly mountaineering, was certainly serious enough in the way of incident, difficulty, and hardship to satisfy the most exigent mountaineer. She was again conducted by Curly Phillips,<sup>1</sup> who has established a sort of monopoly in that region. The outward journey, made nearly by the route followed on previous occasions, occupied from October 10 to 28, the return being made through the foothills, and the whole trip after the first few days was accomplished under severe winter conditions, which taxed Phillips's power to the utmost. Miss Jobe leaves the reader rather breathless when she observes at the conclusion of her narrative: 'At no time on the trip did I suffer from cold.'

From Mr. Bell Smith we get some delightful 'Artist's Reminiscences' of sixteen summers—beginning in 1887—spent in the Rockies and the Selkirks, and from Dr. Coleman a short but vivid summary of a journey through the Andes from the Uspallata Pass to Arequipa; one is surprised at the large extent of them that can be seen by railway and steamer.

To this group of articles must be added a remarkable account, in the 'Alpine Club Notes,' of Atlin Lake as a 'New Centre of Mountain Attractions,' by Mr. L. C. Read, 'guide and photographer, of Atlin.' Atlin Lake is reached *via* Skagway, and is situated far away in the extreme N. of British Columbia, not far S. of the 60th parallel of latitude; it is 90 miles long and surrounded by mountains running up to 7000 feet or more, which give rise to several large glaciers; the dimensions of one of them are estimated at 75 miles by 40. Mr. Read's avowed object is to attract visitors; but he writes in a way which inspires confidence both in his descriptions, which are illustrated by some excellent photographs, and in his qualifications as host and guide. In his prospectus for 1918, he offers to supply everything for parties of from two to four persons, besides conducting

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<sup>1</sup> He subsequently served with the 78th Battery.

expeditions in the neighbourhood—in part by motor-boat—for six dollars per head a day. 'I shall expect each one,' he writes, 'to help me slightly at camp duties and cooking, as I can't do everything alone, though willing to do all I can.' It is an engaging invitation, and makes one wish that one had gone, or was likely to go, to one of Mr. Read's camps.\*

The scientific section contains, besides the record of Mr. Wheeler's latest observations on the Yoho glacier, notes on the flora, birds, and mammals of Jasper Park, by members of the Geological Survey.

There is also a paper of a more popular character on birds and animals in vol. x.

Three more items remain to be mentioned in this readable and varied volume: an eloquent justification of 'National Parks,' by Mr. J. B. Harkin, their present Administrator; a paper of great historical interest on a recently discovered journal of David Douglas, fuller and earlier than the one previously known,<sup>3</sup> which undoubtedly throws much 'New Light on Mounts Brown and Hooker,' and on the way in which the well-known estimate of their heights first came into being; and lastly, a 'Bibliography of the Canadian Mountain Region,' in chronological order, beginning with Alexander MacKenzie's 'Voyages,' published in 1801. Valuable already, it will doubtless be rendered more complete as time goes on.

Volume x. (1919) may be more briefly disposed of. Mr. Bulyea's story of his camps in the Grand Forks Valley, and Mrs. Warren's paper on 'Byways of Banff,' are pleasantly written, but call for no special comment. Decidedly the most important contribution is Mr. Bridgland's article on Jasper Park, which contains much new topographical and orographical information.<sup>4</sup> Among the illustrations is a striking view of the true Mount Geikie, the peak referred to in 'A.J.' xxviii. 365, and Canadian 'A.J.' vi. 85. It may be worth while to add that Mr. Howard Palmer recently wrote to me: You will be interested to know that we reached the base of this mountain [in August 1919], and that it well justifies all you say of it. I am not aware of a more striking rock peak of this class in Canada. Its north-easterly face rises in an apparently smooth wall, 4330 feet sheer above the meadows, and gives a most forbidding impression to the would-be climber. Fortunately, we were not on conquest bent, having only made a short détour to have a close look at it, but the effort was well rewarded.'

\* Captain T. G. Longstaff also speaks very highly of the Atlin Lake District.

<sup>3</sup> See *A.J.* xix. 450, 465.

<sup>4</sup> From a review (p. 105 of vol. x.) of a 'Description of and Guide to Jasper Park,' issued by the Department of the Interior, it appears that the Guide is the outcome of a photographic survey of the central part of the Park, executed by Mr. Bridgland in 1915, and that the topographical portion of it was written by him. For information as to his maps see vol. ix. 165.

In the scientific section, Mr. Sanson's article on 'Snow,' and 'Animal Life on the Snow,' contains some curious and interesting facts; Mr. Fynn's fine photograph of 'Snow Accumulations,' recalls some of the snow-studies of Mr. C. T. Dent, who took a special interest in this branch of Alpine photography. Mr. R. Douglas, Secretary of the Geographic Board of Canada, gives an account of the origin, constitution, and functions of that body, with notes and illustrations of their principles and practice with regard to mountain nomenclature. It is well known that in that sphere the Board has a quite specially difficult and delicate task to perform. 'Slightly over 1000 names [query names of mountains only?] have been approved by the Board since its formation [in 1897]. Of these, 63 per cent. are personal or proper names, 28 per cent. are descriptive names, and 9 per cent. are of Indian origin. The latter are in the main descriptive.' One of the most recent exercises of the power of the Board has been to change the name of Mount Habel in the Yoho region, to Mont des Poilus, in appreciation of the magnificent services of our French allies in the Great War.

A. L. M.

*The Playground of the Far East.* By Walter Weston. John Murray. 18s.

If Englishmen may almost claim to have taught the Swiss the value of their Homeland as a playground for Europe, Mr. Weston has certainly done the same for the Japanese. But when he writes a book on the subject, who is there competent to review it, much less to criticise it?

Mr. Weston deals first with Fuji, the great snow-capped cinder-cone, which possesses scant mountaineering interest, notwithstanding the magnificent picture it makes; but he goes on, in three brilliant chapters, to deal in detail with the exploration of the Southern Alps of Japan, notably with the great peaks of Kosshu. Then follow chapters on the Northern Alps. Good maps of both regions make the narrative quite clear, notwithstanding the difficulty of retaining the strange names. There are chapters also on non-mountaineering subjects (such as the parallelism between Modern Japan and Ancient Greece) which are strikingly original.

The book is very well illustrated, and is altogether a somewhat tantalising account of what one would fain were not quite such a far country.

*On Alpine Heights and British Crags.* By George D. Abraham. (Methuen. 10s. 6d.)

MR. ABRAHAM is well known as the great authority on mountaineering in this country. The present book takes the reader to the Dolomites and to the Oberland. The article on the Fünf-fingerspitze is very readable. There are chapters on 'The Work of the Alpine Guide' and 'How to Climb safely,' but it consists principally of vivid descriptions of work in Cumberland and Wales. The

chapter on guides appears to be mainly concerned with accidents, which is what these valiant men are mainly concerned in preventing! and do prevent much more than is generally known.\*

Are a guide's feet 'uniquely pliable,' or does he not rather seek a flat place, however small, to put his foot on?

Mr. Abraham's experiences on the Col de la Brenva with Melchior Anderegg (who, I think, made his last ascent of Mont Blanc in 1893) bear a close resemblance to a similar episode described in *ALPINE JOURNAL*, xxv. 56.

On p. 108 Mr. Abraham surely maligns Mont Blanc when he says 'a goodly number [of victims] are never seen again.' The incident in the Gabbett accident in 1882 is fantastic (p. 111). The Knubels can hardly be said to have 'wandered on to . . . the cornice' of Lyskamm in 1877, or to have become 'confused' (p. 112). What they did was to underestimate the overhang of the cornice, as may happen, and has happened, to men as good as even Niklaus and P. J. Knubel were.

There have been splendid guides in other centres than those mentioned, such as the Maquignaz in Val Tournanche, the Reys and Croux in Courmayeur. Rangetiner, Kederbacher, from farther afield, were unsurpassed in their day, and Angelo Dibona in later days has shown his powers singlehanded on the hardest expeditions in Dauphiné.

Mr. Abraham lays due stress on the training advantages offered by Cumberland, Wales, and Scotland.

I certainly do not admit that the 'gloomy side [of mountaineering] is ever persistently present.'

The 'stone couloir' on the Matterhorn has not been used for many years. Accidents in the Wetterhorn couloir have been mainly due to slips or possibly avalanches, not to stone-fall.

I certainly would not say that the dangers of falling into hidden crevasses 'have become exaggerated.' A glacier covered with new snow in brilliant sunshine is as dangerous a place as I know, and getting a man out of a crevasse is always a serious undertaking.

The chapter 'How to Climb safely' merits close attention.

The rest of the book is taken up with British climbing, and Mr. Abraham is there on ground where he has no master and few equals.

The book is well got up. Some of the many plates are very fine. That of the Mönch (opposite p. 158) is absurd.

Altogether a good book, breathing the air of the mountains.

J. P. F.

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\* The details are not quite accurate. There were *two* survivors of the Burgener accident (p. 98).

Six guides and porters were lost without trace on Mont Blanc in 1870 (p. 103).

Three guides were killed with O. G. Jones (p. 125).

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, W. 1, on Monday, December 8, 1919, at 8.30 P.M., Captain J. P. Farrar, D.S.O., *President*, in the Chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected Members of the Club, namely, Captain W. S. Blunt, R.E., Mr. E. Coddington, Lt.-Col. G. R. Crosfield, D.S.O., Mr. N. S. Finzi, M.B., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.P., The Rev. R. L. Langford James, D.D., Mr. G. F. McCleary, M.D., and Mr. J. C. Smith.

The PRESIDENT, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 29, there being no other candidates, declared the following members nominated by the Committee to be duly elected as Officers of the Club and Members of the Committee for 1920.

*As President* : Professor J. Norman Collie, Ph.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

*As Vice-Presidents* : Mr. C. H. R. Wollaston and Mr. A. L. Mumm.

*As Honorary Secretary* : Mr. J. E. C. Eaton.

*As Members of Committee* : Captain S. L. Courtauld, Lt.-Col. W. G. Johns, D.S.O., Mr. H. F. Montagnier, Professor E. J. Garwood, F.R.S., Mr. R. L. G. Irving, Rev. Walter Weston, and Mr. R. P. Bicknell, Major M. G. Bradley, and Captain E. V. Slater—the last three named in the places of Rev. W. C. Compton, Sir W. H. Ellis, G.B.E., and Mr. E. B. Harris, who retire by effluxion of time.

It was proposed and seconded and carried unanimously that Messrs. R. S. Morrish and G. E. Howard be re-elected Auditors to audit the Club accounts for the current year.

Professor J. NORMAN COLLIE, F.R.S., said :—Mr. President and Gentlemen, I need hardly say that I feel extremely honoured, more than honoured, in being elected President of this Club, because, as we all know, it is not an ordinary Alpine Club, but *The Alpine Club*, and to be made President of *The Alpine Club* is a very great distinction. As far as I am concerned, I do not think, in fact I know, that I cannot have a greater honour offered to me. When I was elected a Member I was very much gratified, and looked upon the other Members with awe and reverence, and I must say that I still possess a great measure of those feelings. Therefore, I am somewhat anxious and nervous of being made President, for it is a post that needs somebody who understands the procedure of the Club well, but I hope that I shall behave satisfactorily during my term of office. I remember before I was a member of the Alpine Club, and was desirous of being put up, Mr. Alfred Williams gave me a long lecture on the Alpine Club and the duties of a Member, which I have not forgotten. To succeed Captain Farrar in the Chair will be a difficult thing. I know perfectly well that I cannot possibly do what Captain Farrar has done. He is a man

who has looked after the interests of this Club in a way that few could accomplish. He has been busy during a time of trial and trouble, writing many papers for the JOURNAL; he has saved for the Club all kinds of old stories of first ascents and early mountaineers that were in danger of being lost entirely, and that were really worth saving. He has also presided over these Meetings in a way that none of us can hope to excel, but I hope that, although he is relinquishing his office, I shall have the benefit of his counsel and experience. We are indeed fortunate to have had such a President. His untiring energy and his courtesy in matters connected with the post of President, his great wisdom and knowledge in Alpine matters, and his enthusiasm for all that is good in mountaineering leave the Club deeply in his debt. I will do all that I can to further the interests of the Club. (Cheers.)

The PRESIDENT delivered an Address.

Mr. C. H. R. WOLLASTON said :—Gentlemen, a task, in itself very pleasant, falls on me to-night, as your senior Vice-President, though on other grounds I could wish that it was in more capable hands for, as you all know, I am no orator. The subject, however, on which I have to say a few words is one that would make even a dumb man speak. I ask you to pass a very hearty vote of thanks to Captain Farrar, our retiring President, for his very interesting Address to-night, and for the invaluable services he has rendered to the Club during his term of office.

No man who has filled that office before him has been better qualified in any way than he is.

As a mountaineer his reputation is worldwide. As many of you know he commenced his climbing career some forty years ago. He learnt all that there is to learn of the science of mountaineering under some of the best guides that there have ever been, namely, Johann Grill, commonly known as Köderbacher, Peter Dangl, Klucker, and particularly Daniel Maquignaz, and he has, accompanied by one or another of them, made nearly all of the principal ascents from Tirol and the Dolomites through Switzerland to Mont Blanc, to the Graians, and to Dauphiné, and on to the Viso, and as far as the Alpes Maritimes. Further, he profited so much by the experience he gained with them that he has been for many years, and still is, perfectly qualified to act as a thoroughly capable leader of a competent guideless party on all reasonable expeditions.

To turn to another point, I entirely concur in all that Professor Collie has said regarding our President's excellent work. As Assistant-Editor of the JOURNAL his original writing, if I may venture to say so, attains a very high degree of excellence, and, as a sample, I should single out his 'In Memoriam' notice of his old guide, Maquignaz. There the whole heart of the man speaks out in saying '*Ave atque Vale*' to 'his leader on many a glorious day of triumph.'

I am sure you all will agree with me that Mr. George Yeld, the Editor, and Captain Farrar between them have continued to bring out a JOURNAL which, though reduced in size, as was inevitable, has been a joy to read.

As President of the Club, and this is the point on which we have to centre to-night, I can say without fear of contradiction that Captain Farrar has carried out every duty of that office with the utmost zeal and discretion. At our General Meetings, at every one of which he has taken the Chair, he has presided over us ably and genially as we knew he would, and his opening remarks on affairs in which we are specially interested have always been terse and complete. As regards the Committee he has never failed to attend its meetings, and his knowledge, his grip of business, and his sound common-sense have been of the greatest service. I can say, too, of him that whenever some pressing matter arose in the daily routine business of the Club which wanted immediate attention, one had only to telephone to him and he would come here, at whatever inconvenience to himself, before the day was out, to settle and arrange it.

To sum up, he is entitled to a very high seat among his illustrious predecessors in the office of the President of this Club.

I ask you, Gentlemen, to pass a very hearty vote of thanks to Captain Farrar, our retiring President, for his interesting address to-night, and, more particularly, for his invaluable services to the Club during his term of office.

I call on Mr. Herbert Reade, one of his old companions in arms, to second this vote.

MR. H. V. READE said :—It gives me the greatest possible pleasure to second the Vote of Thanks. Captain Farrar might be regarded from three aspects, as a climber, as co-Editor of the JOURNAL, and as President. I have known him as a climber since 1907, when Gask and I asked Farrar to join us. We were rather alarmed when the invitation was accepted for we knew that Farrar had been at it longer than the two of us put together, that he had always gone with the best of guides, and had done most of the big things in the Alps. We had also heard that he was occasionally a little autocratic, and altogether, we felt like two curates who were going to walk with the Bishop. But we found Farrar the best of companions, not only a tower of strength on a mountain, and full of resource, but also full of fun. We learnt much from him, and perhaps he learnt a little from us, and we might claim to have finally converted him to guideless climbing. A little later, Farrar was persuaded to form one of Mr. Geoffrey Young's parties in Wales, and there again they were a little afraid that he would consider the whole thing rather trumpery, but he was delighted with the mountains, and quite impressed with the character of the climbing.

Professor Collie and Mr. Wollaston have already testified to the admirable way in which Farrar has filled the post of President.



I would only like to refer particularly to the tact with which Farrar had handled some thorny questions, and the geniality which had prevented differences of opinion from developing into personal differences which would impair the harmony of the Club.

As joint Editor of the JOURNAL, Farrar has done wonderful work. The JOURNAL was admirable before, but Farrar's complete knowledge of everything which had been done in the Alps, and the way in which he was always in touch with foreign clubs and climbers, has enabled him to make the JOURNAL a record of all important expeditions, to check and edit the accounts of climbs sent in by Members, and to add those notes which were often longer and more valuable than the original text. The trouble which Farrar took to obtain contributions, especially those accounts of early expeditions from the pioneers of the Alps, which have been such a feature in the last year or two, has earned him the gratitude of the Club, and we would all be glad to think that his retirement from the Presidency would leave him even more time to devote to this valuable work.

Mr. G. WINTHROP YOUNG asked permission to add one word, on behalf of the junior Members of the Club, although he might possibly be regarded as speaking retro-actively. The junior Members were accustomed to meet with indulgence and sympathy from their Alpine Club seniors. Captain Farrar had embodied this spirit, and interpreted it in a very wide sense. No juvenile ailment (such as 'New Routes') had been too small for his examination: no ambition too large for his encouragement. It was a consolation to think that, although they lost him as President, yet as writer and as mountaineer the younger generation would still be in contact with a personality of such critical but all pervasive enthusiasm, indomitable courage, and almost unique generosity.

The vote of thanks was carried with acclamation and the PRESIDENT briefly replied.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W. 1, on Tuesday, February 3, 1920, at 8.30 p.m., Professor J. Norman Collie, F.R.S., *President*, in the Chair.

The following candidate was balloted for and elected a member of the Club, namely, Mr. Georges Charles Dimier.

THE PRESIDENT announced with regret the deaths of Mr. Charles Cannan and the Rev. Canon A. Sloman, Members of the Club, elected in 1885 and 1879 respectively, and also of two former Members, Mr. Alfred Parsons, R.A., and Mr. P. J. de Carteret.

DE CARTERET came from the old Jersey family of that name, and could trace his direct ancestry back for centuries.

During the eighties and nineties he was living with his family on the Lake of Geneva, and, being a man of leisure and of great activity, he did an immense amount of climbing, to a great extent guideless, both in summer and winter.

He made one of the earliest winter ascents of the Jungfrau. He was tremendously strong and active and nothing could tire him.

In the early nineties he came to live in England, and took Hanham Court, near Bristol, taking very great interest in local affairs and War work.

Though his visits to the Alps got fewer, he always maintained a very great keenness and love of the mountains.

Mr. GEOFFREY E. HOWARD read a paper entitled 'Compensations.'

A discussion took place in which Sir Martin Conway, Sir Alexander Kennedy, Mr. Douglas W. Freshfield, and Mr. Hugh E. M. Stutfield took part.

The PRESIDENT proposed a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Geoffrey E. Howard for his most interesting paper, which was carried with acclamation.

Every member of this Club will learn with profound regret that

Mr. HERMANN WOOLLEY,  
President A.C. 1908-1910,

died on February 27, in his seventy-fourth year.

We learn with much regret that

Dr. ALEXANDER SEILER OF ZERMATT

died suddenly at Berne, on March 5, in his fifty-seventh year.

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